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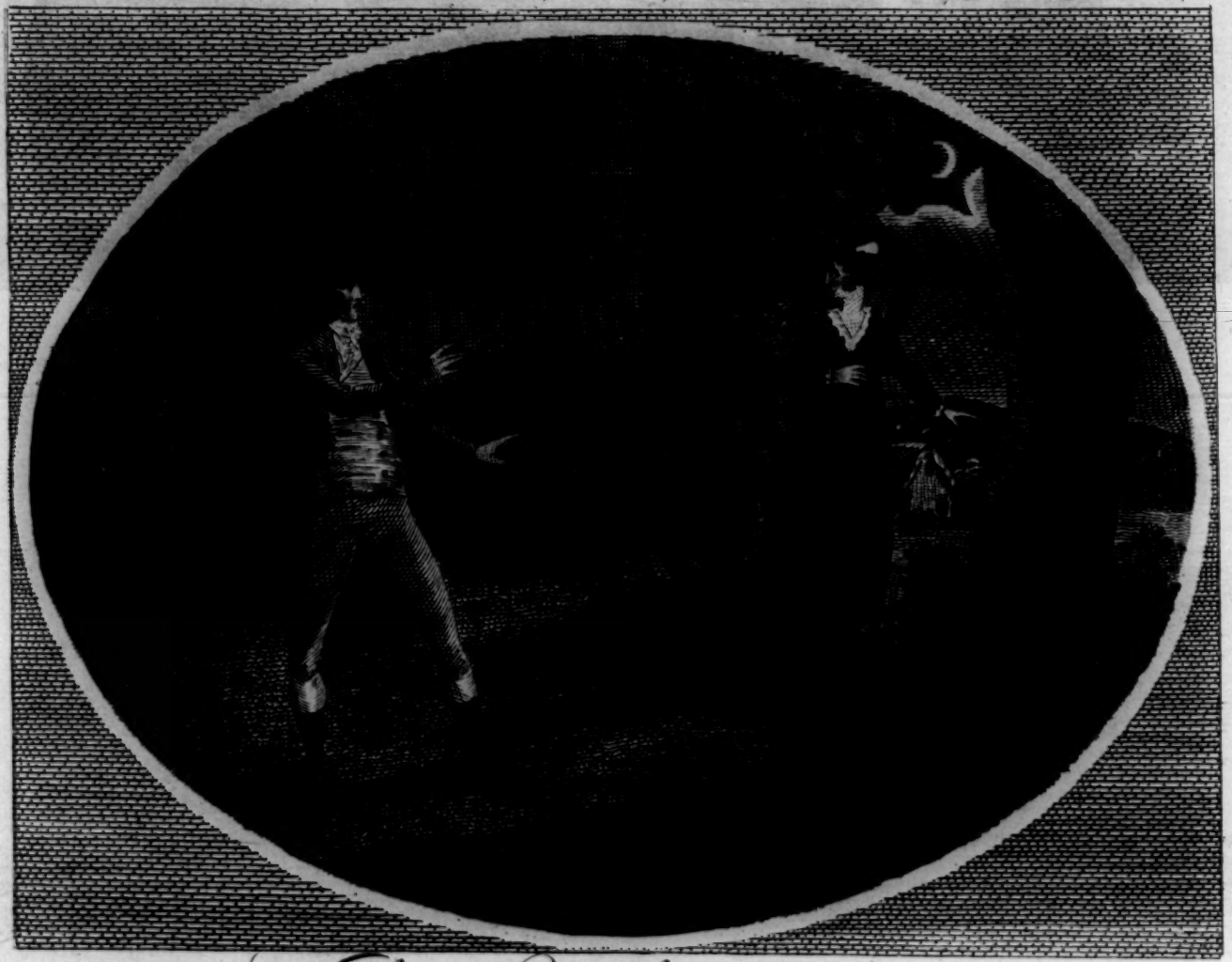
THE

HEIR of MONTAGUE.

FRONTISPIECE



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THE

HEIR

OF

MONTAGUE.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

"—Virtue never is defac'd! unchang'd
" By ſtrokes of fate, ſhe triumphs o'er diſtreſs,
" And every bleeding wound adorns her beauty."

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

Heir of Montague.

CHAP. I.

AT the concluſion of the unhappy rebellion in 1746, diſguſted with the ruin of the party he had eſpouſed, Frederic Montague retired to his country ſeat to indulge and to hide the hopeleſs indignation he had conceived againſt thoſe whom he conſidered in no better light than as aliens and uſurpers.

All his good ſenſe could not conquer the prejudices of education; nor could his good nature correct the bitterneſs with which thoſe prejudices filled his heart.

In the prime of life, full of health and vigour, bleſt with every advantage of perſon

and fortune, he felt, or imagined he felt, happineſs impoſſible, unleſs a Stuart filled the throne: the neighbourhood of the court was inſupportable; he reſolved, therefore, to leave London and its gaieties for ever, and to endeavour to forget the cauſe of his diſcontent among the beautiful woods and fertile fields which ſurrounded B——, the reſidence of his early years.

But he was now to meet a new cauſe of vexation; the country whither he was going, was notorious for its ſectaries, and about B——, the Preſbyterians, the moſt inveterate enemy of his party, particularly prevailed.

In the firſt tranſports of indignation at the recollection of this circumſtance, he reſolved that not one of that perſuaſion ſhould remain upon his eſtate, or receive any encouragement or aſſiſtance from him whatever.

Thus, under a cloud of prejudice and bigotry, did he ſuffer his candour, good ſenſe, and even his humanity to be eclipſed; but, as his temper cooled, the ſtrength of his underſtanding repreſented the folly, and the benevolence

benevolence of his heart revolted againſt the cruelty and injuſtice, of this meaſure, and he diſmiſſed the idea, not without pain at the recollection of ever having encouraged it.

Montague had hoped, that when far removed from the immediate ſcene of his vexation, the remembrance of it would be leſs painful; but the illuſion ſoon vaniſhed, and he found that he had ſought a remedy for diſcontent from its nurſe, and even its parent—cheerleſs melancholy ſolitude. The novelty of the country and of rural ſports, indeed, for awhile amuſed him, but theſe ſoon ſunk into inſipidity. Overcome by *ennui*, vexed with himſelf and all about him, Montague now found it neceſſary to make acquaintance with ſome of his neighbours, all of whom he had hitherto kept at a diſtance.

It was now the beginning of Auguſt, and the neighbouring races being at hand, he reſolved to attend them, and likewiſe to honour the ball by his preſence; his fortune, and the elegance of his perſon and manners, were ſure to ſecure him a good reception; and the attention and reſpect which

he received, diſſipated in a great meaſure the gloom which hung upon his mind. If, however, any remained, it wholly vaniſhed before the brilliant diſplay of beauty at the ball; he ſeemed to have vegetated, or rather ſlept awhile, and now to be reſtored to animation, and his heart bounded with pleaſure, to which it had long been a ſtranger, when he led forth his lovely partner in the dance; her expreſſive beauty, her unaffected gaiety, and ſprightly wit, enchanted him; he looked at, he liſtened to her with ecſtacy; and, before the evening concluded, his heart was gone for ever.

Emmeline Vernon was the only daughter of a gentleman of independent fortune; nothing had been ſpared to improve the fine talents ſhe poſſeſſed from nature; and no accompliſhments had been neglected to adorn a perſon, whoſe natural lovelineſs muſt have enchanted without their aid: but, alas! Emmeline Vernon was a Preſbyterian.

Such was the hiſtory Montague received from a friend of the object to which his heart

heart was loſt beyond recall: the ſudden change from delight to anguiſh, which appeared on his countenance, could not paſs unnoticed by his friend, and with an expreſſion, half ſurpriſed and half ſatirical, he enquired its cauſe; but Montague endeavoured to laugh away the idea, and haſtily retired to lament the hopeleſs miſery, as he deemed it, into which one night's pleaſure had plunged him.

A Preſbyterian! and of courſe an enemy to his party!—would it be prudent, or even decent, to court ſuch an alliance? or was there any probability that herſelf would conſent to receive a man ſo widely differing in his ſentiments, upon two ſuch important points as politics and religion?

We know not which of theſe arguments had the moſt weight with him; certain it is, the latter gave him the moſt pain, that, even if he could ſurmount his own prejudices, it was more than probable her's would prove an inſurmountable barrier to his happineſs.

Every objection he could ſuggeſt he ſum-

moned to his recollection; his reaſon was convinced, and he determined to think no more of it; but the figure of the lovely Emmeline returned to his imagination, and all the troop of arguments he had ſet in array againſt it, vaniſhed before its influence; love looked over and trampled on them all, and remained maſter of the field: he reſolved therefore to pay his addreſſes to Miſs Vernon, as ſoon as he could procure an introduction to her family.

CHAP. II.

FAR from meeting the difficulties which he expected, Montague found that prejudices are not always ſo invincible as he imagined; his offer met with the moſt flattering encouragement; no difficulty remained (the ſettlement being arranged), except the point of religion; this, however, was ſoon overcome by the uſual preliminary

engagement

engagement on ſuch occaſions, that each parent ſhould educate the children of their reſpective ſex in their own perſuaſion.

The happy Montague received the hand, and the fortune of the lovely Emmeline: her heart he could not hope for, that was previouſly engaged by his fortune and equipage: to do her juſtice, however, her rapture on the happy occaſion was ſcarcely inferior to his own;—to triumph over her former acquaintance, to raiſe admiration and envy, to move in the firſt circle, the wife of one of the firſt gentlemen in the county, was a ſummit of felicity to which her moſt ſanguine wiſhes had ſcarce dared aſpire.

But, alas! her triumph was to be as ſhort as it was brilliant; in the firſt year of her marriage, Emmeline was to ſubmit to all the inelegancies, the diſtreſſes, and confinement of becoming a mother; and, as the eye of her huſband brightened with the delight of anticipation, ſo in proportion the gloom deepened which lowered in her own.

Towards the end of July 1747, Montague had the happineſs to ſee himſelf a father;

this, however, ſuffered great alloy, from his lady having declared her total averſion to the ſhocking indelicacy of becoming a nurſe: beſides, ſhe obſerved, if ſhe were ſo inclined, the infinite tenderneſs of her frame would not admit of ſo terrible and improper an exertion: the little Margaret was of courſe committed to the care of a nurſe, and her mother returned to the amuſements ſhe had ſo reluctantly been compelled to relinquiſh.

Another year, however, brought with it freſh cauſe of vexation to herſelf, and freſh delight to her huſband; again ſhe was a mother, and the new-born infant was a ſon. The joy of Montague was now complete; all his gloom and melancholy had vaniſhed for ever; he had forgotten politics, and he now poſſeſſed his every wiſh.

Five years had elapſed without any addition to her family, and Mrs. Montague thought herſelf ſafe from future inconvenience; from preſent ones ſhe had ſecured herſelf by diſpoſing of her children at two of the firſt ſchools; as ſhe had often moſt vehe-

vehemently declaimed againſt the abſurd practice (as ſhe termed it) of keeping children at home. But here ſhe was doomed to be diſappointed; another daughter increaſed the happineſs of Montague; but his lady, exceſſively chagrined, had neglected the cares neceſſary on ſuch an occaſion, and her imprudence endangered her life: ſhe however recovered from the immediate danger, but her health was irreparably injured.

Montague had obſerved with concern the ill health of his two elder children during their infancy, owing to the unnatural cuſtom of refuſing them the food which nature had provided, and he reſolved not to fall into the ſame error with regard to the youngeſt; he therefore hired a young woman in the neighbourhood to be in the place of a mother to it, as its own poſitively refuſed to take that office upon herſelf.

The increaſing ill health of his wife now began to give Montague ſerious uneaſineſs; and, what was ſtill more unfortunate, with her infirmities her ill temper increaſed: this however, that amiable man bore with

unruffled patience; he ſaw not her faults, he only ſaw the lovely girl, firſt in his affection, ſinking into her grave, without the hope of ſaving her. That melancholy event approached faſt, and in the ſecond ſummer from the birth of her child, the unfortunate Emmeline expired in the arms of her huſband.

It was a long while before Montague recovered this dreadful blow; all her follies had not impaired his love, and now ſhe was gone for ever, nothing but what was amiable accompanied her memory. Reaſon, religion, and the three dear pledges left behind, contributed, however, to alleviate his ſorrow; he ſent for the little Emmeline home, reſolved to educate her himſelf, as the extreme reſemblance ſhe bore to her unhappy mother, even at her early years, particularly endeared her to him. Margaret, indeed, reſembled her mother in perſon; but, alas! ſhe likewiſe reſembled her in temper and diſpoſition; and Montague ſaw with pain that art, ſubtlety, and malice already formed part of her character; the little Henry was

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an eaſy good-natured child, but ſhewed no marks of any character whatever.

Montague determined to adhere to his marriage promiſe of bringing up his daughters in the perſuaſion of their mother; he likewiſe made the virtuous reſolution not to inſult the memory of his Emmeline, by chooſing another to ſupply her place.

The years flew on apace unmarked by any circumſtance but the increaſing beauty and amiable diſpoſition which gradually diſplayed themſelves in the little Emmeline; and, as her underſtanding unfolded itſelf, dreadfully did Montague feel the curb which reſtrained him from explaining to her the great truths of religion; except the general outline, he would not venture to ſpeak upon the ſubject, ſo fearful was he of infringing upon a promiſe which he held ſo ſacred.

With rigid exactneſs he ſent his daughters to the conventicle, while his ſon accompanied himſelf to church: but when, on theſe occaſions, Emmeline would take his hand, and aſk why ſhe might not accompany him, he would take her in his arms, kiſs her, and burſt

burſt into tears, as bitter remembrance returned to him; and the ſenſibility which ſhe diſplayed ſtill increaſed his affection, and aggravated the jealouſy and hatred which his imprudent partiality had raiſed in the breaſt of Margaret.

But, to render this complete, he reſolved to keep Emmeline at home, while Margaret and Henry were again ſent to the ſchools from which they had been taken. To amuſe the ſolitude in which he kept his favourite, he purchaſed for her every ſpecies of entertaining books, without conſulting his judgment in the ſelection; and unfortunately, among the number, were all thoſe romantic volumes which miſlead the imagination and corrupt the heart. The ſuſceptible Emmeline ſucked in the delicious poiſon with but too much eagerneſs; her young heart was warmed by the expanded ſentiment, and her imagination inflamed by the laboured deſcription. Thus Montague, by misjudged kindneſs, laid the foundation of miſery for his beloved child.

At the uſual age Miſs Montague left her ſchool

ſchool, and at the ſame time Henry was ſent to the univerſity.

Margaret had long determined, when ſhe returned to her father's houſe, to become its miſtreſs; and this the keenneſs of her underſtanding enabled her to effect; ſhe governed, when in all things ſhe appeared to ſubmit: to her ſiſter her behaviour had the appearance of the utmoſt kindneſs; but Emmeline ſoon found herſelf under an iron rod which ſhe had never felt before; and the cunning malice of her ſiſter contrived to give her the ſevereſt pain when ſhe pretended to be giving her pleaſure.

To this cruelty the meek ſpirit of Emmeline ſubmitted with the utmoſt patience; her books were her conſtant reſource againſt the melancholy and diſcontent which began to grow upon her heart; and, under their influence, as ſhe advanced in years, ſhe grew more romantic, and more impatiently did ſhe long to reſemble one of the numerous heroines ſhe found ſo much extolled.

Several years paſſed, during which Margaret received many offers; but, as that lady

lady had reſolved to liſten to nothing beneath a title, every one had been rejected.

Emmeline meanwhile grew every day more amiable and more romantic; and at eighteen her beauty ſo far ſurpaſſed that of her ſiſter, as to excite in her jealous breaſt ſtill ſharper malice and ſtill more ſteadfaſt hatred. Henry, however, loved her ſincerely; his honeſt heart knew not what envy or jealouſy were, and Emmeline returned his affection with the warmeſt gratitude; but, alas! Henry was no more a Sir William or a Lord Edward in underſtanding, than Margaret was a Harriot or a Letitia in diſpoſition; and Emmeline thought it very unfortunate, that her own family was ſo very inferior to what (from her books) ſhe ſuppoſed the reſt of the world to be.

Among the chief of her pleaſures ſhe began to number the regular attendance on the conventicle; the expreſſive energy of the paſtor lately elected there charmed every heart; but Emmeline perceived not that his manly perſon and expreſſive eyes, conſtantly fixed on her, had raiſed emotions

which

which did not altogether owe their origin to devotion; and Oſmond unfortunately too readily perceived, and but too well knew how to improve, the advantage which he had gained over her young heart.

He contrived to be introduced to her, and had the honour to eſcort her home whenever ſhe attended the conventicle, with no other companion except her own maid, which frequently happened, as Margaret thought it not only intolerably tireſome, but likewiſe exceſſively vulgar, to go out on a Sunday afternoon.

Theſe happy opportunities Oſmond of courſe improved; and his converſation, his manner, and his perſon were ſo exactly thoſe of the character her books had taught her to admire, that Emmeline imagined herſelf nothing leſs than an heroine, and her heart was filled with joy and exultation.

An event however now happened which had nearly cruſhed all the hopes of Oſmond; the health of Montague had for ſome time been rapidly on the decline, and his phyſicians had preſcribed the air of the South of France,

France, as the only means for its reſtoration. Thither it was ſettled Henry and Emmeline were to accompany him; but, as Margaret had declared her utter averſion to the journey, ſhe was in the mean time to viſit an aunt in Suffolk.

It wanted not the penetration of Oſmond to perceive, that if this arrangement took place, all his hopes were gone for ever; but he had indulged them too long to give them up ſo eaſily, and his heart was now engaged in the purſuit, which intereſt had firſt pointed out.

CHAP. III.

ONE evening, after painting the exceſs of his paſſion in the moſt extravagant manner, he entreated Emmeline to allow him one moment's converſation the evening before their eternal ſeparation, as he termed it. She ſtarted at firſt at the propoſal; but conſulting

ſulting her memory, ſhe found it juſtified by innumerable precedents among her heroines, and a few more ſoft perſuaſive words from her lover ſecured her compliance.

The firſt week in September was fixed upon for the intended journey of Montague to the continent; and at ſeven o'clock in the evening preceding his departure, the unhappy miſguided Emmeline attended the aſſignation of her lover at the extremity of the garden, as had been agreed upon.

Oſmond now urged the violence of his paſſion, his anguiſh, his deſpair, and even gave hints of deſtroying himſelf, as is uſual on ſuch occaſions, when terror is neceſſary to extort compliance, until Emmeline, overcome with grief, horror, and a thouſand conflicting paſſions, burſt into tears and leaned againſt a tree for ſupport. Oſmond conceived that it was now time to mention his ſcheme; he began by repreſenting in the moſt melancholy colours, the conſtraint of her preſent ſituation, the tyranny of her ſiſter, and the ſad alternative of a journey to the continent with a ſick father, (who, we

ſhould

ſhould have obſerved, had, ſince her ſiſter's reſidence at home, much abated of his uſual kindneſs to herſelf.) He then enlarged upon the beauty of Scotland, but particularly of Glaſgow, his native place, and propoſed their immediate flight thither, as he ſaid a chaiſe was now waiting for them in the avenue.

"Do not think," continued he, in a low tone, "do not think that I can live without you: Oh, Emmeline! you do not love, or you would not heſitate;—but go, go to France, and a richer nobler lover——and oh! may he love you half as well as I."

This language was irreſiſtible; ſcarcely knowing what ſhe did, Emmeline ſuffered herſelf to be led away while he ſpoke. Oſmond placed her in the chaiſe, and the fate of the miſerable deluded Emmeline was decided paſt recal.

From every ſtage ſhe wrote letters filled with penitence and intreaties of forgiveneſs, directed to her ſiſter, to be forwarded to her father; for a ſomething from within ſeemed to ſay ſhe was not acting right; and not all her

her heroine's actions, not even the ſweet ſmile of Oſmond, could always check the terror and remorſe which were ſtealing faſt upon her heart; but ſhe had gone too far to recede, and when they arrived at their journey's end, ſhe gave her hand to Oſmond without heſitation.

The family of Oſmond was of much reſpectability in Glaſgow; but, as it was large, the office of paſtor to ſo numerous a congragation as that of B——, was conſidered as no contemptible proviſion for a younger branch, and this ſituation was gained by a friend of the family who happened to reſide in the ſouth of England.

To ſee their ſon return ſo ſoon, with a young and beautiful bride, could not but excite much ſurpriſe and ſome anger in the parents of Oſmond; this, however, was eaſily removed when the birth and fortune of the lovely bride were known, and Emmeline was received with the utmoſt courteſy and reſpect. This, however, did not leſſen her anxiety for anſwers to the numerous letters which ſhe had ſent. Weeks, months paſſed away, and

no

no letter arrived; ſhe now began to hope that her own had merely miſcarried; and ſhe wrote another to her ſiſter, filled with the moſt pathetic expreſſions which her heart could ſuggeſt, but to this no anſwer was received.

The family of Oſmond now began to look extremely cool on Emmeline; the winter, the ſpring were gone, ſtill ſhe heard nothing from her friends; and, to add to the cruelty of her ſituation, ſhe found ſhe was ſhortly to become a mother.

It was in the middle of the month of June, when Emmeline had juſt returned from a melancholy walk, happening to caſt her eye upon the table, ſhe ſaw among a number of letters one with the Clare poſt-mark; ſhe eagerly ſnatched it up; it was directed to Mrs. Edward Oſmond, in her ſiſter's writing; with a trembling hand ſhe broke the ſeal; it contained the following words.

"How can the ruined child of infamy and deſpair aſk for comfort from an injured broken heart? Oh! loſt as much to hope as to goodneſs, what words can a ſiſter uſe, but

ſuch

ſuch as point to anguiſh and repentance?—Repentance! ah, what will that avail you now? can repentance waſh out the ſtain of infamy, or recal a murdered parent back to life?—

"Emmeline! dear, unhappy, fallen angel! where ſhall you look for conſolation? every where deſpair ſurrounds you; your ſun is ſet, your hopes are gone for ever! months, years, will roll away, and no pleaſure, no peace, ſhall ſmile upon them! the never-dying worm, the fiend remorſe, ſhall gnaw your heart for ever; and all a ſiſter can beſtow, is a ſad, an unavailing tear!

MARGARET MONTAGUE."

Emmeline had juſt ſtrength ſufficient to go through the cruel letter, and then ſunk lifeleſs in a chair. Oſmond at this inſtant entering, flew to her aſſiſtance, and to his eager enquiries into the cauſe of her diſorder, ſhe made no other reply than pointing to the letter which lay open on the floor; he eagerly caught it up, but no ſooner had he read it through, than, daſhing it on the ground,

ground, and ſtamping on it with violence—"Harpy! fury! monſter!" cried he, "is this all the kindneſs, the conſolation you could beſtow on an only ſiſter?—But comfort yourſelf, my Emmeline; what, though your unnatural family reject you, you have one friend who never will deſert you."

"It is too late," anſwered Emmeline in a low tone, "it is too late to talk of comfort; but, Edward, if ever you loved me, fly with me inſtantly to B——."

"To the end of the world!" cried Oſmond; "but, my love, can you bear ſo long a journey at preſent?"

"I can bear any thing," cried Emmeline, "better than remaining here; for," added ſhe, wildly, "to-morrow is the funeral, and do not think that all your art ſhall keep me from attending it!"

"You ſhall go this inſtant," cried Oſmond; "oh! do not look ſo wildly, my love; compoſe yourſelf, my Emmeline."

Committing her to the care of his mother, he flew immediately to obey her; in a few minutes a chaiſe was at the door, into which

which he immediately handed her, with no other proviſion for the journey than a ſmall ſum which his brother had ſupplied him with.

Nothing material happened in their journey from Glaſgow to London; it had been uncommonly tedious, as Oſmond rather attended to the dictates of prudence, than the impatience of Emmeline. When, however, they arrived in London, their ſtock of money was reduced to a ſum but juſt ſufficient to take them to B——; and what was to be their fate when they arrived there, Oſmond trembled to think.

Emmeline had been too much irritated by the delays ſhe had already met with, to conſent to remain in London the night, and though it was already twilight, ſhe inſiſted upon taking horſes immediately: Oſmond conſented with the utmoſt reluctance, as at that time the London roads were infamous for repeated highway robberies, and the road which they were to take, lying in the neighbourhood of Epping foreſt, was particularly dangerous.

And dreadfully were his apprehenſions realiſed;—they had arrived within two miles of the town which terminated the ſtage, when a perſon riding up to the chaiſe ordered the poſt-boy to ſtop. Emmeline ſcreamed and fainted; and as Oſmond let down the glaſs to order the boy to drive on, the man rode up to the window—

"Deliver!" cried he.

"Yes, villain!" anſwered Oſmond, drawing out a piſtol, "this lead into your brains."

Both inſtantly fired, and Oſmond ſunk back bleeding in the chaiſe: the horſes meanwhile had taken fright at the report of the piſtols, and ſet off at full ſpeed; the boy, however, preſently ſtopped them, and Emmeline ſlowly recovered. Though dreadfully wounded, Oſmond had not loſt his ſpeech, and the darkneſs of the night prevented the blood from being ſeen; to her eager enquiries, therefore, he merely anſwered that all was well, and that himſelf had merely received a ſlight wound in his arm.

When

When they arrived at the inn, Oſmond begged Emmeline to go with the maid into a room, and that himſelf would follow as ſoon as he had ordered a chaiſe; but in fact he felt himſelf too weak to move, and this he was anxious to conceal from his wife, as ſo great a ſhock in her very advanced ſituation, he well knew muſt be dangerous; at the ſame time he deſired the waiter inſtantly to ſend for a ſurgeon.

That gentleman upon his arrival declared the wound to be extremely dangerous, and that it would be madneſs to think of proceeding; to this, however, he would not liſten, reſolving that no motive originating in himſelf ſhould delay them. As ſoon as his wound was dreſſed, he was lifted into the chaiſe, and Emmeline was informed it was ready: her mind fortunately was not in a ſtate to obſerve the ſingularity of her huſband being ſeated before herſelf, and not handing her in as uſual: nothing at preſent occupied her thoughts but the proſpect of ſoon ſeeing her brother, who ſhe hoped was by this time returned from the continent,

and of whoſe kind reception of her ſhe entertained no doubt.

It was very late when they arrived at B——, and as Emmeline approached the reſidence of her early youth, her ſpirits ſunk; but, when the chaiſe drove up the walk, and ſtopped at the well-known door, ſhe had ſcarce ſtrength to deſire the poſt-boy to knock.

With long and painful impatience did they wait, but no one appeared; they knocked again louder than before, but ſtill no anſwer was made. After waiting a long while, a window opened above, and a ſhrill voice enquired who was there?

"Is Mr. Montague returned?" cried Emmeline.

"Mr. Montague!" repeated the voice; "I don't know, but I'll go aſk."

A long pauſe now enſued; at length the ſame voice ſpoke—

"No he a'nt; but grandmam wants to know who you are, and what you want?"

"Tell her it is Miſs Emmeline; we are juſt arrived from London; deſire ſhe will imme-

immediately prepare a bed for us, as we are much fatigued."

Emmeline expected to ſee the door open immediately, but to her diſappointment the voice again returned.

"Grandmam don't know no ſuch name, and won't open the doors to no body at this time of the night."

"Oh! but," cried Emmeline, "tell her it is I; it is her young miſtreſs; it is Emmeline Montague. Oh, my brother! my brother! where are you?"

She burſt into tears; but all ſhe could ſay was in vain, for before ſhe ſpoke the window was ſhut.

"Oh! what ſhall we do? where ſhall we go now?" cried Emmeline, obſerving this, "we are loſt indeed."

The poſt-boy, who had not remounted his horſes, obſerving her diſtreſs—"I aſk pardon, madam," ſaid he, "but as Mrs. Jenkins don't ſeem to know you, I have a ſiſter-in-law lives at a farm-houſe cloſe by, who I am ſure will be proud to accommodate you; you know her, ma'am, I dare

ſay; Sally Freeman as married my brother."

"Yes, yes," cried Emmeline, haſtily, "drive thither inſtantly.—Oh! that ever I ſhould have to beg a night's lodging of the daughter of my nurſe!"

In leſs than a quarter of an hour they arrived at the door of the farm-houſe; the poſt-boy ſtruck the window with his whip; it preſently opened—

"Well, and who's there?" cried a female voice.

"Oh, Sally!" ſaid the poſt-boy, "here is Miſs Emmy come, and we can't get the folks up at the hall, ſo you muſt let us come in here to-night."

"Miſs Emmy!" exclaimed Sally, "what, Miſs Emmy Montague! well, I had given over all hopes of ever ſeeing her any more; but is ſhe well John."

"Come down," cried John," and you ſh ll hear mo.e; but don't keep us here wa t ng."

In antly a light was ſtruck, and i 1 the next minute Sally herſelf appeared at the door

door; the nrunning to the chaiſe—"Oh, Miſs Emmy!" ſaid ſhe, "well, who'd ever have thought to have ſeen you again? well, the Lord knows I have cried many a night about you; but I am ſo glad—and you can't think what a fine child my little Billy's grown."

"Good Lord, Sally," cried John, "now do hold your tongue; why you don't conſider the poor gentleman may die, while you ſtand talking.

"Die!" ſcreamed Emmeline; "Good God! what do you mean?—Edward, my my love, why are you ſo ſilent?"

"Let us alight, my Emmeline," ſaid Oſmond, faintly: meantime Sally, as much alarmed as Emmeline, brought the candle to the chaiſe. And now the horrible ſpectacle of the man dearer to her than all the world—pale, haggard, and covered with blood, ſome of which had flown upon herſelf, ruſhed on the ſight of Emmeline; but ſcarce had ſhe caught a glimpſe, than uttering a loud and fearful ſhriek, ſhe ſunk down ſenſeleſs in the chaiſe.

Obſerving this, John took her in his arms, and carried her into the houſe; his ſiſter, meanwhile, ran about diſtracted, now crying, now teazing Oſmond with queſtions and with pity, until her kinſman, obſerving her—"Now, for God's ſake, Sally, don't act like ſuch a fool; what ſignifies taking on? go and call your mother to take care of Miſs, and your man to help me to lift out this poor gentleman."

Sally inſtantly obeyed; and with the man's aſſiſtance, John contrived to carry Oſmond into the houſe. Emmeline had been taken up ſtairs, and her nurſe, who had ariſen to attend her, had with much difficulty recovered her from her fainting, when a meſſage came up, that Oſmond wiſhed to ſee her.

Hearing this meſſage, nothing could prevent Emmeline from obeying the ſummons; ſhe flew towards him, and leaning over the chair in which he ſate, in ſpeechleſs agony awaited his commands.

"My love!" he faintly whiſpered, "give me one kiſs;—God bleſs thee, Emmeline!

—Oh!

—Oh! forgive me—my injured love, forgive your ſeducer!—forgive——"

He faltered;—Emmeline threw her arms around his neck, begged of him to live, for her ſake, for her poor infant's, vowing ſhe would follow him in death, as ſhe had done in life.

Oſmond feebly claſped his arms round her waiſt, and fainted. The poſt-boy had, meantime, gone for the apothecary of the village, who at that inſtant appeared; exceſſively ſhocked at what he ſaw; that humane man ſeverely blamed them for ſuffering the interview, and ordered Emmeline to be removed; this however was vain, ſhe vowed no force ſhould ſeparate them now.

"But let me intreat you, madam, ſaid the apothecary, "indeed you will kill your huſband if you remain with him."

"Kill him!" cried ſhe, ſtarting back; "kill my poor Edward!—my only friend!—Oh, never!—where would you have me go? promiſe me, however," added ſhe, wildly, "that you will not take me to my ſiſter, and I will go."

"We will not, we will not," ſaid the apothecary, "only conſent to go up ſtairs."

Emmeline, ſtaring wildly at him for ſome time, at length conſented to go, and ſuffered herſelf to be undreſſed, and put into the bed prepared for her. The apothecary now declared great apprehenſions for her life, and he reſolved not to quit her that night.

In this hour of complicated horror and diſtreſs, Emmeline became a mother; an event which all her fatigue and terror had but little accelerated, ſo imprudently had her unfortunate journey from the north been undertaken.

Emmeline remained in a ſtate of extreme weakneſs and danger, and her ſenſes continued much diſordered; but in every lucid interval, ſhe continually enquired for her unfortunate huſband, and repeated his name over and over with deſpairing fondneſs.

Towards the evening of the following day, as Sally was ſitting by her ſide, and Emmeline had been talking for ſome time very reaſonably, a little girl who lived in the houſe

ran

ran in—" Aunt," ſaid ſhe, " Margery is come to lay out the corpſe."

" The corpſe! exclaimed Emmeline, ſtarting, " what corpſe?"

" The corpſe of the poor gentleman," anſwered the child, " who died this morning."

Emmeline only anſwered by a deep convulſive groan, and ſunk back on the pillow.

Terribly alarmed, Sally ran to the apothecary; but when ſhe told him what had happened—" Then," ſaid he, ſighing, " ſhe is deſtroyed; ſhe will not ſurvive it."

He then haſtened to her room, where the miſerable Emmeline was raving in all the fury of delirium.

" What," exclaimed ſhe as they entered, " were we not born of the ſame mother? and ought you to be ſo cruel againſt me?—Edward, my love, are you ſo cold that you cannot help me? Oh! lift your feeble arm, and do not let her mangle me!—But do not look ſo ſad upon me, love!—I tell you, cruel men, if you will ſtop me, he will die; and when he is gone for ever, which of you

will comfort me?—Edward, Edward, my love! I gave up all for you, and do not you deſert me.—look yonder, that is my father's corpſe;—ſoft!—huſh!—and preſently I will ſhew you the dagger with which I ſtabbed him to the heart!"

In this manner did ſhe continue incoherently to ramble; at length, overcome with fatigue, ſhe again ſunk down in a ſtate of inſenſibility.

The good nurſe and her daughter looked at the apothecary with the moſt cruel anxiety; he only ſhook his head, and deſired that ſhe might be kept quiet, otherwiſe there would be no hope at all.

The unfortunate Oſmond had lingered in great pain all night; towards morning he again called for Emmeline, but being told ſhe was aſleep, and it might be dangerous to diſturb her—"Bleſs her! God bleſs her!" cried he, claſping his hands, and raiſing his eyes to heaven; "and oh, may ſhe forgive me!"

He then prayed for ſome time inwardly in the ſame poſture.

His

His ſinking pulſe, and that dreadful turn of countenance which is the forerunner of death, convinced the apothecary, who was ſitting by him, that there was nothing to hope.

Oſmond feebly graſped his hand, and for ſome time looked earneſtly and piteouſly in his face, then cloſed his eyes for ever.

Emmeline did not arouſe from the ſtate of inſenſibility into which ſhe had fallen, until early the next morning; when, ſlowly opening her eyes, ſhe called Sally, who ſat weeping at her ſide, by her name.

"Sally," ſaid ſhe, "my dear Sally, I feel my laſt hour is approaching, and I would wiſh to write to my brother, to intercede with him for my poor little innocent; can you aſſiſt me?"

Sally ran immediately and brought the implements for writing, and reaching a ſmall table, ſupported Emmeline while ſhe wrote: when ſhe had finiſhed, ſhe ſunk down ſilent and fatigued with the effort ſhe had made. After a long pauſe—

"I have had a terrible dream," continued

Emmeline,

Emmeline, "let me tell it to you, Sally;—and do not weep ſo, my poor girl! I ſhall ſoon be beyond the reach of ſorrow:—I thought I was in the church of B——, contemplating the hatchment of my father; when ſuddenly it moved, a hand lifted it away, and my father appeared from behind it; he ſtepped down before me; but the uſual ſmile upon his countenance, was changed to ſuch a frown—oh! it was terrible!—he tore aſide his waiſtcoat, and I looked—oh, heaven forgive me!—I ſaw his heart was torn aſunder! He ſaw my anguiſh, and his countenance changed to a gentle ſadneſs, which looked like pity and forgiveneſs, and ſuddenly turning from me, in a low and ſolemn voice, he ſaid—"my Emmeline, come!"

"Oh! for God's ſake, my dear Miſs Emmy, don't talk ſo," cried Sally, burſting into a freſh agony of tears—"you will, indeed you will break my heart."

"Do not diſtreſs yourſelf, my Sally," ſaid Emmeline, "do not weep for me, but bring my poor little Frederic, (that muſt be his name)

name) and bring your own little boy, that I may ſee him too.

Sally immediately obeyed, and Emmeline, taking one in each arm, kiſſed them both, and wept over them for ſome time; then, raiſing her eyes to heaven—"Almighty God!" ſaid ſhe, "when I am gone for ever, bleſs this unhappy innocent!—Oh! do not viſit the ſins of his miſerable mother upon him!—and when he ſhall hear her crimes, oh, may he not hate her memory! and if his family reject him, may he one day find the friend in this child, which I have found in its mother. Sally," continued ſhe, "if my brother will not receive him, love my child; cheriſh him for my ſake. Do not, when your poor Emmeline is gone from the earth, ſuffer him to be deſerted!—I would ſay more, but I grow very faint!—Sally, my good girl! God reward you for your kindneſs; give this to my poor child, the reſemblance of his unhappy mother; and wear this ring for my ſake. Bleſs—God bleſs you! farewel!—my father—my Edward—I come!" Emmeline extended her dying hands over the

the children, and raiſed her dim eyes to heaven, then cloſed them with a ſtruggling ſigh, and all her ſorrows were at an end.

Poor Sally, terrified at the purport of her laſt words, and by the paleneſs which overſpread her countenance, called to her ſeveral times with great emotion, but no anſwer was returned; ſhe took her hand, it was cold as marble, and fell motionleſs on the bed;—this was conviction—ſhe ſhrieked aloud and ran wildly out of the room down ſtairs, where ſhe found her mother; unable to ſpeak, ſhe threw herſelf into a chair, and covered her face with her hands, wept, or rather groaned aloud. The poor old nurſe gueſſed, however, from her diſorder, what had happened, and though her own tears flowed faſt, was endeavouring to offer her comfort, when the apothecary entered.

"Oh! Sir," cried the old nurſe, "it is all over!"

Upon this the daughter burſt into a freſh agony of tears.

"Compoſe yourſelf, I entreat you, Mrs. Freeman," ſaid the apothecary, ſighing deeply,

deeply, "why ſhould you lament? no doubt poor Mrs. Oſmond is happy."

"Oh, yes!" cried Sally, ſobbing; "I don't doubt that ſir; but poor Miſs Emmy was ſuch a dear kind young lady; and—and I am ſure I ſhall never ſee her like again;—and then to die ſo!"

"But ſurely, it is better rather to think what can be done for the infant, than idly to lament thoſe, who are as much beyond pity as they are beyond pain; if you therefore—"

"If I—" interrupted Sally; "oh! Sir, you don't think that I'll ever forſake the poor little love? I'll take care of it as if it was my own, and love it as dearly too."

The next thing to be conſidered, was the means of interment for the unhappy pair. Sally and her mother, although both attached to the church of England, agreed that it would be proper for them to be buried in the ground appropriated to the conventicle, as had frequently, though not always, been the cuſtom with the diſſenters at B——: but to this an inſurmountable obſtacle aroſe; ſince the departure of Oſmond

no

no new paſtor had been choſen, and at preſent the office was vacant: Sally was glad, however, at the recollection of this circumſtance, obſerving that ſhe ſhould have been very ſorry if poor Miſs Emmy had not been buried in the church-yard like a Chriſtian. The next Sunday was appointed for the performance of this melancholy office.

Thoſe who have been preſent at a country burial, may form an idea of the mixture of awe and ſorrow which marked the countenances of the rough peaſantry of B—— when the curate began the ſolemn ſervice for the dead; a tear ſtood in every eye, and every one crouded to the grave, as if anxious to take one laſt view of thoſe who once had been ſo much the objects of their affection, now ſo much thoſe of their compaſſion and regret.

Among the reſt, a young woman with a child in her arms, crouded to the brink of the grave, and continued looking earneſtly at the curate, while the tears ran down her cheeks. As ſoon as the ſervice was over, Mr. Evans, the clergyman, followed the unhappy

unhappy Sally and her mother to their home, in order to enquire into the circumſtances, which as yet he had heard but very indiſtinctly: many a tear did he endeavour to ſtifle during the relation, and when it was concluded, he begged leave to ſee the infant; when it was brought, he took it in his arms, and after kiſſing it with great tenderneſs—"And what," ſaid he, "is to become of this poor infant?"

"Why, ſir," anſwered the nurſe, "my daughter and I think to take care of it ourſelves, as well as we can."

"But you are very poor, my good Mary."

"No, ſir, thank God, pretty well for that; the 'Squire (God bleſs him) was very good to us; to be ſure ſince my poor Sally's huſband died, we have been obliged to hire a man to look after our little farm, and that you know, Mr. Evans, takes off a good deal of the profits; but ſtill we are very well to do, and I dare ſay we ſhall manage."

"But I underſtand the elder Mr. Montague is dead; don't you think the young man

man would receive his ſiſter's infant? it was always ſaid he was very fond of her."

"No, ſir, no; I have no great hopes of that; for when it was found that Miſs Emmy was gone, there was a moſt fearful to do at the hall; and I heard that the young 'Squire declared with a terrible oath, that he would never ſee her face again as long as he lived, and that it was all the old 'Squire's fault for bringing her up a Preſbyterian; and this hurt the old 'Squire not a little. But however, they went to France, and young madam went into Suffolk, you know; but Miſs had left orders with Mrs. Jenkins, who to be ſure, though one would not wiſh to ſay it, is no better than ſhe ſhould be, but that's to herſelf; ſhe left orders that, if Miſs Emmy came back, ſhe was not to let her in; and ſo you ſee, ſir, there is but very little to hope."

"Very little indeed," cried Evans, ſighing: "but who was that young woman who ſeemed ſo deeply affected at the burying? I do not recollect having ſeen her before."

"Oh that, ſir, is poor little Patty Cowſlip

ſlip, as good a woman as ever was, and very induſtrious; for you muſt know, ſir, that though ſhe was only churched laſt Sunday, ſhe goes and makes hay every day, that I often tell her I think it will be too much for her."

"But do you think ſhe could be prevailed upon to ſuckle this child? for I cannot approve of any other method for it at preſent."

"Why, ſir, you muſt conſider——not but what Patty would be willing to do any thing I am ſure; but then, with two children to nurſe, ſhe muſt give up her haytime, and I am afraid her huſband won't like that."

"But if ſhe were paid for it?"

"Yes, ſir, yes," cried the nurſe, pauſing; "but I'm afraid, ſir, I can't raiſe quite money enough for that."

"Well, well," ſaid Evans, ſmiling at her good-nature and ſimplicity, "I believe I can get over that difficulty myſelf; I ſhall pay her what ſhe demands with great pleaſure."

"That

"That will be very kind indeed, ſir," cried Sally, breaking the ſilence; "and beſides, mother, you know the hay-time will ſoon be over, and then in the harveſt I'll glean for her myſelf, and ſo you ſee it won't much ſignify."

The good Evans was quite overwhelmed with pleaſure at the benevolence of theſe honeſt peaſants, overlooking, in his admiration of them, the praiſe himſelf deſerved for the part he took in ſo amiable an action.

The curacy of B—— did not then exceed thirty pounds a year; this, and a chapel in the neighbourhood, the income of which was ſtill lower, bounded the expectations and the wiſhes of Evans. From this ſmall income he contrived always to appear as a gentleman; and ſcarce a diſtreſſed perſon in B— or its vicinity, but had felt the effects of his bounty. Notwithſtanding his youth, his decent cheerful piety, his regular and exemplary life, and conſtant attendance on his duty, had inſured him the reſpect, as much as his eaſy affable deportment and generous benevolence had gained him the love

love of his parishioners; not only those of the establishment, but even those who dissented from his religious tenets, could not refuse the tribute of praise to his actions.

Patty Cowslip had been married about six years, every one of which had been marked by the birth of a child; she was, of course very glad to accept the offer of Evans. Frederic was immediately committed to her care, and being naturally kind and tender-hearted, she soon began to love him as much as her own little girl.

CHAP. V.

TO return to Montague;—that unfortunate man, upon the discovery of Emmeline's elopement, abandoned himself to anguish which rent his heart; far from receiving comfort from his remaining children, they rather concurred to increase his sorrow.

Henry, although in general kind and good-natured, was weak, paſſionate, and inconſiſtent: at the firſt intelligence of his ſiſter's diſgrace, he burſt into a torrent of rage, vowing eternal vengeance againſt her ſeducer, declaring implacable hatred againſt his unhappy ſiſter, and reproaching his father in the moſt indecent terms, as having been the origin of all her miſconduct, in ſuffering her to be educated in a perſuaſion, whoſe characteriſtics, he ſaid, were hypocriſy, fraud, and diſobedience.

At any other time Miſs Montague would have ſeverely reſented ſuch an aſperſion on her ſect, but at preſent contenting herſelf with a contemptuous and ſarcaſtic look, ſhe gravely obſerved, that an affair of this kind was the natural reſult of the ſecluded life Emmeline had been ſo unfortunate as to lead, where it was impoſſible that ſhe could make a proper eſtimate of men and things. "Not to mention," added ſhe, "thoſe pernicious books, of which ſhe was ſo imprudently allowed the peruſal."

"Do not, oh! do not, my children," cried

cried the miſerable Montague, "do not aggravate my misfortunes; they are ſurely bitter enough without your reproaches. And oh! if my poor Emmeline would even now return to her duty, I would forgive, I would forget all that is paſt; I will write to her this inſtant—I will intreat, I will ſupplicate her once more to call me father."

"My dear father," cried Margaret, "why will you condeſcend ſo much? I myſelf will write to her, and if ſhe vouchſafe to reply, (a thing I very much doubt) I will immediately ſend you intelligence, at the ſame time ſhe ſhall receive your generous forgiveneſs."

"Margaret," ſaid Montague very gravely, "if you had ever been a parent, you would not have made that ſpeech; if the poor deluded girl is to be reclaimed by any one, it muſt be by her father; and do not you attempt to rouſe my pride to combat with my love for your unhappy ſiſter."

"You will do as you pleaſe, ſir," cried Henry violently," but I will never acknowledge-that infamous wretch for a ſiſter again."

"Forbear

"Forbear your violence, ſir," interrupted Montague ſternly, "and do not let the firſt quality of your ſiſter, which you attempt to imitate, be diſreſpect to your father." Then darting a look of indignation at both his children, he left the room, and retired to his ſtudy; here he ſate down and wrote to his unhappy daughter in every term which kindneſs could dictate, entreating her return, and declaring that ſhe ſhould not only be forgiven, but be dearer to him than ever. Over this letter he ſhed many a bitter tear; to be deſerted by the only child worthy of his affection, was an idea too full of anguiſh for ſenſibility like his to bear.

He had juſt folded it when his ſon entered; Henry flew towards him, entreated his pardon for the violent behaviour of which he had been guilty, aſſured him of his reſpect and affection, and even his forgiveneſs to his ſiſter. Montague would make no anſwer, but taking one of Henry's hands in both of his, he looked earneſtly in his face; at length —"Oh, my ſon! oh, my Henry!" ſaid he, "do not you forget what is due to your father."

"I

"I will not—I will not," cried Henry, the tears ſtarting to his eyes; "oh! do not ſuppoſe it; compoſe yourſelf my dear ſir, I cannot bear to ſee you thus; let me purſue our poor Emmeline."

"No, Henry," cried Montague ſighing, "no, ſhe ſhall not be compelled to return; I have written to her, but I ſcarce know what direction to put; I think, however, as I have heard that the family of her ſeducer reſides at Glaſgow, that will be the only certain direction."

"But, ſir, by that time, ſhe will be married."

"And wouldſt thou have it otherwiſe, Henry? is not her reputation irreparably ſtained? and——but," continued he, interrupting himſelf upon obſerving the colour riſe in Henry's cheeks, "do not diſcompoſe yourſelf again, my ſon; we muſt reſign ourſelves to unavoidable misfortunes. I wiſh to ſend this letter immediately."

Henry took the letter and quitted the room; meeting his ſiſter at the head of the

ſtairs, "What have you there Henry?" ſaid ſhe.

"A letter from my father."

"Oh, you may give it to me; I am going to write ſeveral, and I will ſend them together."

Henry complied.

"But," continued ſhe, "is not my father ready to ſet out? the chaiſe has been waiting for ſome time."

Montague now joined them, and Margaret repeated her queſtion and obſervation.

"I ſhall poſtpone the journey ſome time," anſwered he, and paſſed on. Margaret looked mortified and diſappointed; but ſhe feared to remonſtrate, knowing that her father was already ſo much incenſed againſt her.

Three weeks did Montague wait, in expectation of an anſwer to his letter, but in vain. Deſpairing of getting one, he again fixed the day of his departure, and Margaret was not again diſappointed; that diſcreet lady had received all Emmeline's letters, and had diſpoſed of them as her prudence ſug-

geſted: every day, however, dreading that one of them might at length reach her father before ſhe could have the addreſs to intercept it, ſhe longed anxiouſly for his departure.

It was early one morning in October, when Montague and his ſon began their journey to Dover; the fatigue of travelling Montague endured with great patience, but the ſettled melancholy of his air, and the viſible decline of his health, were ſubjects of ſerious uneaſineſs to his ſon: bitterly did Henry regret his own violent conduct, to which he could not but attribute part of the dejection of his father; and although Henry was deſtitute of the fortitude requiſite to keep him from falling into error; yet ſeverely would he repent when repentance was vain; and all his good reſolutions were ſure to ſink before the next attack of paſſion.

CHAP.

CHAP V.

MONTAGUE and Henry arrived ſafe at Paris; here the former recogniſed ſeveral old acquaintances; among them he was particularly pleaſed to meet Sir Thomas Page, a gentleman with whom he had ſpent much of the early part of his life.

Montague's long ſecluſion from the world had prevented his ſeeing the lady and daughter of his friend; to them, however, he was now introduced, and a ſtricter intimacy commenced between the gentleman than had ever ſubſiſted before.

In one of their converſations, a match was propoſed, by Sir Thomas Page, between his daughter and Mr. Henry Montague. Montague, ſomewhat ſtartled by the abruptneſs of the propoſal, referred him to Henry himſelf, declaring, that he wiſhed his ſon to conſult nothing but his own inclinations on a point

point which ſo nearly concerned his own happineſs

Miſs Page was an agreeable girl, much about the ſame age with Henry, full of vivacity, with much goodneſs of heart, ſome ſenſe, and ſome vanity: ſuch a character could not fail of touching the warm heart of Henry; more eſpecially as, except his ſiſter, ſhe was by far the moſt beautiful woman he had ſeen: his handſome manly perſon, and amiable open countenance, had likewiſe by no means made an unfavourable impreſſion on the heart of Cecilia.

The obſervation of theſe circumſtances, had probably ſuggeſted the idea of the propoſed union, which would be very deſireable, as it was not altogether convenient to Sir Thomas, to give his daughter a ſplendid portion; and he hoped, with ſo wealthy a man as Montague, the honour of an alliance with the daughter of a baronet, would amply compenſate for that deficiency.

This fair proſpect was, however, ſoon to be overclouded. Ever ſince his reſidence in France, Montague, inſtead of being bene-

fitted by the air, as had been expected, felt his health every day more rapidly decline; and ſoon after he had ſanctioned the addreſſes of his ſon to Miſs Page, a fever ſeized him, which baffled all the ſkill of his phyſicians. His end approached; he entreated his ſon not to delay his unionlonger than was abſolutely neceſſary; to forgive and to receive his ſiſter, and eſpecially to defend her from the cruelty of Margaret; aud concluded with requeſting him to make B—— his principal reſidence. Henry promiſed to obey him in every thing, and his father expired in his arms.

Thus fell that amiable and unfortunate man, a victim to a broken heart.

This blow at firſt fell ſeverely upon Henry; but, in proportion to its violence, it was tranſitory: to feel laſting impreſſions was no part of his character, and ſucceſsful love is a powerful antidote to ſorrow. The remains of his father he accompanied to England, and ſaw them depoſited in the family vault at B——, then returned to the continent with all the expedition in his power: his

happineſs

happineſs was to be delayed ſix months, a term which the reſpect he retained for his father's memory would have made him conſider as indecently ſhort, had not that amiable man enjoined him to delay it as little as poſſible.

Towards the end of April they returned to England; and as the time preſcribed was now nearly expired, Henry ventured to name the day which was to make him happy; this was readily acceded to; and ſhortly after their arrival in England, he received the hand of Cecilia.

Although amidſt his preſent happineſs, he would not ſuffer one ſad recollection of his ſiſter's diſgrace, or his father's death, to intrude; yet he felt extremely unwilling to return to B—— at preſent, and preferred paſſing the ſummer at the ſeat of Sir Thomas Page, whither that gentleman had given him a preſſing invitation; he had likewiſe intended to go from thence to Bath, there to paſs the winter; but Cecilia's extreme impatience to ſee the elegant ſeat at B——, of which ſhe had heard ſo beautiful a deſcrip-

tion, at length overcame his reluctance, and early in the month of Auguſt he conſented to take her thither.

The wiſhed-for day of departure at length arrived, and Cecilia leaped into the chaiſe with all the delight a youthful mind naturally feels when about to explore new ſcenes of pleaſure.

"Well, I am ſo happy that we are going at laſt," ſaid ſhe when they were ſeated; "I could not have endured that odious Bath; beſides I have been there ſo often. But," continued ſhe, "it is in Eſſex, is it not? Eſſex I have heard is very unhealthy."

"About B—— I believe it is very much the contrary."

"But ſhall we arrive there to-night?"

"That will be impoſſible, as we ſhall not reach London until eight o'clock,"

"And how far is it beyond London?"

"I believe it is near thirty miles."

Cecilia ſighed.

"Oh, that is dreadful! to be two days upon the road, is one of the moſt fatiguing things in the world; and I had planned

planned ſuch a delightful walk for to-morrow morning."

This terrible journey was however at length happily at an end, at one o'clock the next day the chaiſe drove up the avenue. No ſooner was Cecilia alighted, than ſhe hurried through every apartment in the houſe, eager to explore her new poſſeſſion, ſcarcely attending to the *worthy* Mrs. Jenkins, who, after making one of her very beſt courteſies, and welcoming her to her new habitation, followed her with the keys, and was relating in order every thing which had happened ſince the departure of her maſter to the continent.

Cecilia had quite forgotten the fatigue of the journey; and as ſoon as ſhe had completed the ſurvey of the houſe, ſhe entreated Henry to favour her with his company in a walk round the grounds; to this he readily aſſented.

Delighted with every thing ſhe ſaw, Cecilia had never felt ſo happy in her life; not content with traverſing the grounds, ſhe propoſed, when arrived at the extent

tent, a ramble into the fields adjoining.

"My love," cried Henry, "you will fatigue yourſelf to death; you forget you have to return."

"Oh, that is a fine excuſe for being weary yourſelf; but however I muſt walk in this charming corn-field, and you may ſit upon that bench until I come back; I ſha'n't want you, for you are horribly dull to-day."

The recollection of paſt ſcenes had indeed caſt a great damp upon Henry's ſpirits, and he was not ſorry to obtain a ſhort reſpite from the gaiety of his wife, which, for the firſt time, was diſagreeable to him;—he did as ſhe deſired him; and the light-hearted Cecilia tripped gaily on.

But ſhe had forgotten, that there were no trees to ſhelter her from the heat of the ſun in the ſultry corn-field; and ſhe had ſcarce walked a few ſteps before ſhe was ready to ſink with fatigue: the hedgerow oppoſite, however, afforded a delightful ſhade, and thither ſhe directed her ſteps.

As ſhe approached, ſhe ob erved a woman ſitting under a tree with a child in her arms.

"Well," ſaid Cecilia, "that is the ſweeteſt little infant I ever ſaw in my life; who does it belong to?"

The woman ſtarted.

"Is it your's?" purſued Cecilia.

"Mine ma'am!—no ma'am."

"To whom does it belong then?"

"It belongs to Mr. Evans, ma'am."

"And who is Mr. Evans?"

"Mr. Evans, ma'am! why Mr. Evans the parſon."

"Oh, very well; let me kiſs it;—you're a ſweet little thing, what's your name?"

"His name is Fred—Frederic Oſmond."

"Well, that's a pretty name;—but, ſtay—why you ſaid it belonged to Mr. Evans, and now you call him Oſmond; how can that be?"

"I don't know much about it, ma'am; but Mr. Evans pays for its nurſing."

"Oh, a relation;—well, and what are you doing here?"

"I came here to glean; but I cannot do

it to-rights; for you ſee this poor little baby is but a month old, and it won't lie and ſleep by itſelf."

"Well, well, do not come any more to glean, I will make up the loſs," cried Cecilia, feeling in her pocket; but, alas! ſhe had left her purſe behind. "Well," continued ſhe, "come to the hall this afternoon, and bring your little child, and enquire for me; my name is Montague."

"Why ſure," cried the woman, "you an't Miſs ——"

"No, that indeed I am not," cried Cecilia, laughing."

"Well, I beg pardon, ma'am," ſaid the woman; "but might I be ſo bold as to aſk if the young 'Squire is returned?"

"Yes, indeed he is."

"Then will you be ſo kind as to give him that letter," ſaid the woman.

"Aye, with all my heart;—well, remember to come. Farewel."

Cecilia then ran away, exceedingly pleaſed with the adventure. Returning to Montague, and throwing herſelf on the bench beſide

beſide him—"Oh, I am fatigued to death!" ſaid ſhe; "but, Henry, I have ſeen the ſweeteſt little infant—"

"And what is it like?" ſaid he, careleſsly, and not much attending to what ſhe ſaid.

"Like—why, like you, I think."

"Like me! that is paying me too great a compliment."

"Well, I don't know; it is only a month old, and thoſe little things, you know, are like nothing. Stay, I meant to have told you its name; I ſaid it three or four times over to remember it; but however its nurſe made a ſtrange confuſion, and ſaid it belonged to one perſon, and then called it by another name."

"That was a puzzling circumſtance, indeed," cried Montague, laughing.

"Oh, but I had forgotten," rejoined Cecilia, "I have a letter."

"A letter!"

"Yes; and, by its appearance, I ſhould not conceive that you had the moſt delicate correſpondent in the world."

Montague tore open the ſeal; read it through

through in great perturbation, and then ſunk down in an agony of grief, and groaned aloud.

"Good God! Mr. Montague, what is the matter with you?" cried Cecilia, ſtarting up in great alarm.

"Oh! look, look at that!" ſaid he, throwing her the letter, "I cannot bear it." Cecilia took it, and read as follows:—

July 10, 1773.

"Oh, my brother! by the time you ſhall receive this, the wretch who writes it ſhall ceaſe to be the object of your deteſtation—ſhe ſhall ceaſe to live!

"But, if ever you loved her, liſten to the requeſt, which in this awful hour ſhe dares to make,—when you paſs the grave of Emmeline, hate, deſpiſe, and curſe her memory!—but, oh! look with compaſſion on her child!

"By all thoſe happy hours which we have paſſed together—thoſe hours that never muſt return!—by all the love that once you felt for me—I entreat, I implore you, do not viſit my faults upon his innocent head!

"The dear unhappy cauſe of all my ſorrow is gone beyond the reach of vengeance. Henry, you cannot puniſh him now:—and when the wretched Emmeline is cold, and, can offend no longer, you will have no object of hatred left.

"Oh, may your ſorrows, your diſgrace, your anger, be buried with her!

"Oh, Henry! what would I not give, at this moment, to receive one cheering ſmile from you: it would ſweeten my laſt hour:—but it muſt not be—we muſt never meet again! Will you, Henry, will you deſert my child?—Oh, no! you will love him for my ſake, for the ſake of what I once was;—and do not liſten to my cruel ſiſter.

"I can write no more; my brother, God bleſs you!—Farewell!

EMMELINE OSMOND."

The tears flowed faſt down the cheeks of the gentle Cecilia as ſhe read. When ſhe had concluded—

"Well, my love!" ſaid Montague, "what can I do?"

"Send for the poor infant, inſtantly, and educate it as your own."

"But, oh! ſhe is gone! ſhe is gone!—uncomforted! friendleſs! ſhe breathed her laſt! My poor Emmeline! I ſhall never ſee thee more! I cannot comfort thee now!"

"My dear, Henry! do not grieve for what cannot be recalled; but ſhew your love for your ſiſter, by your kindneſs to her child: And now I recollect," continued Cecilia, after a ſhort pauſe, "that muſt have been her child which I ſaw juſt now—(Montague looked earneſtly at her)—for the name, if I recollect, was the ſame."

"And do you think that the woman is gone?" cried he riſing in haſte.

"My love, you are too much diſordered to ſee her at preſent; and I have ordered her to come to the hall in the afternoon; we ſhall then be certain."

The ſad deſponding Montague yielded, after ſome heſitation, to her advice, and accompanied her back to the houſe.

Neither Montague, nor his father, had ever related to Cecilia or her family, the unfortunate

unfortunate affair of Emmeline; merely having ſlightly ſpoken of a younger daughter, who had been the ſource of great uneaſineſs; but Henry now gratified the curioſity of Cecilia, and related as much as he knew of the ſtory.

CHAP. VI.

PATTY Cowſlip, (for it was to her Cecilia had ſpoken) although much ſurpriſed, and ſomewhat alarmed at the notice which had been taken of her, yet reſolved to obey the ſummons.

Cecilia no ſooner heard of her arrival, than ſhe flew down ſtairs to meet her in the hall.

"Oh," ſaid ſhe, "did you not ſay that the name of this ſweet little child was Oſmond?"

"Yes ma'am."

"Then

"Then it muſt be the ſame," cried Cecilia, haſtily ſnatching it in her arms, and kiſſing it; "well follow me" continued ſhe, running up the ſtair-caſe with her uſual vivacity; and entering the room, where ſhe had left her huſband—"Oh, my dear Henry!" cried ſhe, "I was not deceived, this is the child of your poor Emmeline; and this good woman can tell you all the ſad circumſtances."

"Can ſhe?" cried Montague, ſighing deeply; "you ſaw her then? continued he, addreſſing himſelf to the woman, while the tears ſtood in his eyes.

"No, pleaſe your honour," anſwered Patty; "I did not ſee Miſs, I only ſaw the coffin."

"The coffin!" repeated Montague, ſhuddering,

"Yes, ſir, I was at the burying of her and poor Mr. Oſmond: they were both buried together, your honour; I'm ſure I ſhall never forget it; but Dame Freeman is below; ſhe came with me, ſir, and ſhe can tell you all about it."

"Call

"Call her up inſtantly," ſaid Montague.

Patty obeyed, leaving the infant with Cecilia.

A ſcene of anguiſh followed; the ſimple narrative of Sally went too near the heart of Montague; he could not endure it, but riſing in the midſt, he abruptly quitted the room.

Exceſſively ſhocked, Cecilia ran haſtily after him."

"Henry, my dear Henry!" ſaid ſhe, "for Heaven's ſake, for your own, for my ſake, reſtrain theſe violent emotions; remember, reparation is ſtill in your power; I will love this child with all the affection of a mother; let us then unite in kindneſs towards it, that it may enjoy that happineſs which was denied its mother.

Soothed by her words, Montague returned; but his heart was too cruelly wounded to hear any more at preſent of the ſtory; taking the child in his arms, he kiſſed it with tenderneſs, and informed Sally of his intention to take it immediately under his protection.

This

This led to an enquiry into its preſent ſituation; but when Sally modeſtly related the ſteps which herſelf, in concert with the worthy Evans, had taken, new remorſe tortured the unhappy Montague.

"Oh, my poor Emmeline!" ſaid he, "you found a friend in every one but your brother!"

"But, my Henry," cried Cecilia, "you are a friend to her, you will liſten to her dying requeſt—you will love her child."

"Will I! aye with more than a father's love."

Sally was now diſmiſſed; and it was agreed that the little Frederic ſhould continue with Patty at preſent.

Montague had been too much engaged in more intereſting affairs to caſt a thought upon a perſon ſo little loved as Margaret; but now her unfeeling behaviour, previous to his accompanying his father to the continent, returned to his memory; and that propenſity which we have to change the object of our cenſure, when that object is ourſelves, converted his remorſe into indignation and reſentment. "You

"Yes, my dear Cecilia," ſaid he, in a trembling voice, "I ſee I was not ſo guilty; it is to Margaret, that wretch whom I am forced to call ſiſter, it is to her we owe all this; but I will ſend for her, and ſhe ſhall be a witneſs of her work."

Then, riſing in a violent rage, he flew to his ſtudy, and wrote as follows:—

B——, Auguſt 12, 1773.

"Unwelcome as your preſence muſt be now, your brother calls upon you to walk upon the graves of the father and the ſiſter you have murdered; come, and though you cannot feel, learn to tremble!—yes, wretched woman! you ſhall tremble at the anger of him who hates to call himſelf your brother. HENRY MONTAGUE."

Frightful as was the rage of Miſs Montague on the receipt of this letter, and ſovereign as was the contempt which ſhe expreſſed, both for his underſtanding and his threats, yet too great was her prudence to hazard the reſentment which ſhe affected to deſpiſe

deſpiſe, ſhe knew not how far ſhe might be dependent on his pleaſure in point of fortune: contenting herſelf, therefore, with venting her rage, indignation, and contempt, before her favourite domeſtic, ſhe reſolved to employ every art to conciliate the favour of her brother, and inſtantly to obey his ſummons.

Montague trembled with rage when he heard her name announced. When ſhe entered, he ſtifly bowed his head, and coldly introduced her to his wife; Margaret advanced towards her, ſaluted her, burſt into tears, and then judged it expedient to fall into a dreadful hyſteric fit; but with an art peculiar to herſelf, on ſuch occaſions, taking care to remain in a dependant poſture, until her brother flew to her aſſiſtance.

"My dear ſiſter!" ſaid Montague, "oh! I have gone too far; I did not think ſhe would have felt it ſo ſeverely."

Cecilia, equally affected by her beauty, her reſemblance to Montague, and her diſtreſs, could not refrain from tears; ſhe aſſiſted to ſupport her, and reproached her huſband for his ſeverity towards her.

For awhile did Margaret, with the firmneſs of a ſtoic, endure every application uſual on ſuch occaſions; and it was not until after a long fit that ſhe choſe to recover; but as it was highly proper to remain in a ſtate of weakneſs, ſhe begged, in a feeble voice, to be conducted to her room.

When ſhe appeared next morning, ſhe declared herſelf much better, and received the kind enquiries of her brother, with a ſmile which at once confirmed the forgiveneſs of Montague, and won the heart of Cecilia; not a word which looked like reproach appeared in her converſation; ſhe attributed her diſorder on the preceding evening, to the painfulneſs of her feelings on entering the houſe in which ſhe was born, the firſt time ſince the father ſhe loved with ſo much affection was no more.

It required, however, all her art of diſſimulation to conceal her chagrin, when the reception of the child of the unhappy Emmeline was mentioned; a fluſh of crimſon paſſed over her face, but it was ſucceeded by a forced ſmile; and ſhe declared herſelf very

anxious

anxious to ſee the ſweet offſpring of her ever-to-be-regretted ſiſter.

This affected and painful ſerenity was not deſtined to continue long with Margaret.

Montague determined a few days after her arrival, to open the will of his father in the preſence of his ſiſter. Here, to her inexpreſſible delight, Margaret found herſelf poſſeſſed of an ample fortune, wholly independant of her brother. Poor Emmeline was only recommended to the kindneſs of Henry, but that, however, in the warmeſt and moſt pathetic manner.

From that hour the behaviour of Margaret took a very different turn; in proportion as ſhe had been obſequious, ſhe judged it requiſite to aſſert her rights, and prove her independance, and ſhe either treated her brother with contemptuous neglect, or ſatirical ill-nature.

Montague now took full poſſeſſion of his father's eſtates; but his fortune and independence were far from being advantageous to him; his mind was not made to bear proſperity; pride and arogance, and their ſeeming

ſeeming oppoſites, but conſtant attendants, meanneſs and envy, took poſſeſſion of his heart, and impaired its natural generoſity and openneſs; and while he received infinite gratification from the company and mean adulation of the inferior gentry ſurrounding him, if any one was mentioned who boaſted a ſuperior fortune, or a larger eſtate, it furniſhed mortification ſufficient to overbalance all the exultation he felt from the magnitude of his own poſſeſſions. This cauſe prevented his viſiting London, where, loſt among the crowd, he could no longer ſhine, the tyrant and ſuperior of a little diſtrict; and where his eyes muſt be conſtantly tortured by the diſplay of equal and ſuperior magnificence to his own; but with no reſource within himſelf, the country had no joys for him,—all was one dreary round of alternate melancholy ſolitude, or mean triumph over inferiors.

Theſe circumſtances, aided by the conſtant malevolence and ſatire of Margaret, contributed not a little to ſour a temper naturally far from good, and Montague had

no motive to reſtrain it: far from happy himſelf, he wiſhed not to ſee others ſo, or rather diſliked the appearance of that in another, which he could not enjoy himſelf.

The amiable Cecilia ſaw and deplored the change in her huſband, which deſtroyed her happineſs indeed, but did not impair her love; through all his unkindneſs and all his faults, ſhe ſaw him only as the man whom ſhe firſt had loved. The livelineſs of her temper gradually ſudſided into calm placidity; and although ſhe could not but ſometimes regret, that the pleaſures of ſociety, which ſhe was ſo fond of, and ſo well calculated to adorn, were denied her; yet ſhe never would complain: religion, the pleaſure of reading, and the accompliſhments which ſhe poſſeſſed, taught her reſignation, and afforded conſolation and amuſement, and ſhe wiſely reſolved to prize, and rejoice in, the bleſſings which ſhe poſſeſſed, rather than pine for thoſe which were withheld.

A temporary gleam of pleaſure ſhone upon the mind of Montague, the winter following the events juſt mentioned; Cecilia was delivered

livered of a daughter, whoſe infant beauty was the lively repreſentation of its mother's; this could not but be the ſource of delight to both parents; even Miſs Montague was pleaſed, entertaining a hope, that it would be the cauſe of abatement in kindneſs to Frederic, whom ſhe deteſted with a malignity equally cauſeleſs and implacable.

The incumbent of the living of B—— dying about this time, the pride of Montague, which would not ſuffer him to remain under an obligation, united with gratitude, which he could not but feel, made him reſolve, as the living was in his own gift, to beſtow it upon Evans, as a reward for the kindneſs that gentleman had ſhewn to the infant of his ſiſter.

Cecilia had now a new ſource of pleaſure; ſhe bent her whole attention to the care of her two lovely infants, for ſhe was reſolved to make no difference in kindneſs between them; many a time would ſhe ſteal away from the endleſs altercations and ill-natured diſputes, of her huſband and his ſiſter, to ſpend an hour in the nurſery, with the only

objects which could now give her pleaſure or comfort; and while obſerving their infant beauty, ſhe would awhile forget the many cauſes ſhe had for vexation and diſcontent.

In this round of dullneſs, uniformity, and ill-nature, ſeveral years rolled over the family of Montague, until it became neceſſary to conſider of a proper mode of education for Frederic and Cecilia. Here a dreadful altercation aroſe; Miſs Montague decidedly giving her opinion in favour of public, and Montague himſelf, although formerly of the ſame opinion, reſolutely maintained the ſuperiority of private education: Mrs. Montague contented herſelf with expreſſing her wiſh not to be ſeparated from her daughter; with regard to Frederic, ſhe would not pretend to determine.

"You intend then, madam, I preſume," obſerved, Miſs Montague, "to educate my niece yourſelf?"

"Certainly."

"Although your abilities are equal to the taſk, yet, do you conceive that you can ſpare time

time from your numerous avocations, ſufficient for ſo important a purpoſe?"

"My avocations!" repeated Mrs. Montague, ſmiling, "I believe they will not be ſo very numerous as to prevent my performing the taſk I undertake; I repeat, therefore, that I will not be ſeparated from my daughter."

"Nor will I be ſeparated from my ſon," cried Montague with a fierce and indignant glance at his ſiſter.

"And you too, I hope, anſwered Margaret, intend educating him yourſelf?"

"No, madam; no, I do not; and I do not underſtand what you mean by that ſneer; and let me tell you, Miſs Montague, I do not deſire your inſolent interference, and I beg to be allowed to be my own maſter in my own houſe."

"Oh, dear ſir, your houſe, yourſelf, and all your concerns, are equally indifferent to me," cried Margaret, with a ſcornful glance at Mr. Montague.

Shocked at the malevolence, and terrified at the ſtorm, which ſhe ſaw gathering in her

huſband's countenance, poor Mrs. Montague haſtily quitted the room; too well knowing, that any attempt of her's to conciliate would rather inflame the dreadful quarrel, which ſhe ſaw was about to take place between them.

In a few minutes ſhe was followed by her huſband; his face was inflamed by paſſion, which for ſome minutes ſtopped his utterance.

"My dear Henry," cried Mrs. Montague, trembling, "compoſe yourſelf; why will you ſuffer trifles to agitate you ſo much?"

"Trifles! repeated Montague; "do you call it a trifle to be conſtantly tortured by the ill-nature and inſolent tyranny of that woman? Good God! am I not my own maſter? and ſhall I not manage my own family as I pleaſe? I am glad, however, that you, Cecilia, are of my opinion; I came to tell you that I had fixed upon a tutor for my Frederic, I mean the worthy Dr. Evans; I ſhould like to mention it to him immediately; I will trouble you to write to him; as I am too buſy to do it myſelf." He

He then left her abruptly.

Notwithſtanding her vexation at the violence of his temper, Mrs. Montague was exceedingly rejoiced that he adhered to his reſolution of educating Frederic at home, an arrangement which met her warmeſt approbation, although delicacy would have prevented her interfering, had the determination been otherwiſe. She ſat down, therefore, very cheerfully to write to Dr. Evans, although ſhe felt a great reluctance to the indelicacy of aſking that gentleman to undertake ſo heavy a taſk; when the late favour conferred upon him would ſeem to give her the opportunity to demand, as a right, what ſhe rather wiſhed to requeſt as a favour.

Her note was as follows:—

"Mr. and Mrs. Montague requeſt the favour of half an hour's converſation with Dr. Evans upon buſineſs of importance."

Dr. Evans, extremely ſurpriſed at this note, attended immediately.

When his name was announced, Mrs. Montague haſtened to inform her huſband; ſhe found him writing in his ſtudy: when he heard that Dr. Evans was come,

"I am ſo extremely buſy at preſent," ſaid he, ſomewhat confuſed, "that I cannot poſſibly ſee him; no one can break this matter to him better than yourſelf, my dear Cecilia; I ſhould be much obliged to you to undertake it."

Notwithſtanding the evident impropriety of this requeſt, Cecilia, unaccuſtomed to oppoſe her huſband in any thing, did not even remonſtrate, but prepared to comply, although the taſk was ſo diſagreeable to herſelf.

CHAP. VII.

MRS. Montague went to receive Dr. Evans in the drawing-room. The uſual compliments being paſſed, ſhe felt ſo much aukwardneſs at the taſk impoſed on her, that ſhe

ſhe knew not how to begin an explanation; at length,

"I underſtand" cried Dr. Evans, "you did me the honour to wiſh to conſult me on an affair of importance."

"I know not how to apologize," cried Mrs. Montague, confuſedly, "for the liberty I have taken.—"

"Rather, madam," interrupted he, "the favour you have conferred."

"On the contrary," ſaid Mrs. Montague, "it is I who am about to requeſt a favour, in which much of our happineſs is concerned; in ſhort, Doctor, the education of our dear little Frederic, becomes an object of ſerious concern; Mr. Montague prefers the private to the public method on many accounts; and it was upon this I wiſhed to conſult you."

"You do me honour, madam, and I will ſpeak my ſentiments on the ſubject. Both modes of education have had their advocates; and the arguments on both ſides have been very ably ſupported. The advocates for the public method contend, that it opens the heart, corrects the ſelfiſh, while it enlarges

and improves the ſocial, affections; that the intercourſe of equals, prevents the pride and arrogance naturally attending on ſolitude, while conſtant competition inſpires emulation; that it teaches the knowledge of the world, and early inures youth to its dangers and difficulties. To thoſe who object to the vices of a public ſchool, they anſwer, that virtue is better than innocence; that is, to reſiſt vice, is better than to be ignorant of its nature: that a youth who has been brought up far from the haunts of vice, will be in more danger on his entrance into the world, than he who has been early accuſtomed to obſerve its baneful effects on others, as muſt be the caſe if a child be ſent to a public ſchool. Theſe arguments are ſpecious, they are even ſtrong and convincing; but they have been confuted. It may be demanded, are the mean chicanery, the artifices, the double dealings, practiſed at public ſchools, likely to open the heart? are the ſocial affections to be enlarged amidſt conſtant contention, ſtrife, and ill-nature, in a miſerable oligarchy, where a few elder tyrants rule

rule with deſpotic and cruel authority, over a number of weak and defenceleſs ſlaves, who are prepared, in time, to tyrannize in proportion as they have been compelled to ſubmit. With regard to the next argument, emulation; any one who has obſerved a public ſchool muſt know, that to run a race, to play at cricket, &c. are far greater objects of emulation than to attain the reputation of a ſcholar; ſo much ſo, that to be a ſtudent, is ſufficient to excite the ridicule, hatred, and malice of the majority of a public ſchool. The world, indeed, is far from abounding in virtue; but I fear that a public ſchool is by no means a favourable miniature of it; but rather, like the miniature of the ſun ſhewn by a burning-glaſs, its vices being there drawn, like the rays of the ſun, to a focus. This ſimile may be called violent and unjuſt, it is, however, otherwiſe; for, in the world, vice is ſcattered abroad, and a man may ſteer clear of it; but there is nothing which can debaſe or deprave the human heart, which a lad is not compelled to witneſs, to encounter, I had almoſt ſaid

to participate, at a public ſchool. The laſt argument is yet more ſpecious, and yet more fallacious;—alas! and is it in the haunts of vice that virtue is to be found? is it on the ruins of purity alone that ſhe can triumph? are reaſon and religion ſo weak, ſo impotent, that it is neceſſary that the heart be callous to reſiſt the influence of vice? but this argument contradicts itſelf; if youths become not vicious at a public ſchool, where are the dreadful examples which are to deter others from becoming ſo? if it be allowed, that there are ſuch examples, then does vice abound; if, on the contrary, virtue triumphs, then does the argument fall, for then, no ſuch examples exiſt. My dear madam, let us not deceive ourſelves, vice is as incurable as it is contagious; and a heart once contaminated, will never be purified to the love of virtue. Early inſtil the principles of our holy religion into your child; ſuffer him not even to be acquainted with vice, until reaſon ſhall be ſufficiently confirmed to diſcover its deformity; and the mind, long habituated to the love of virtue, ſhall poſſeſs ſtrength to reſiſt

reſiſt its allurements, and then fear not to truſt him in the world."

"Your arguments give me great pleaſure," ſaid Mrs. Montague, ſmiling, "they juſtify the opinion on principle which, I muſt own, inclination led me to adopt;—your picture of public education makes me ſhudder."

"It is not, however," rejoined the Doctor, "that I am blind to the diſadvantages which attend the private method; theſe, unleſs they are obviated, may be attended with conſequences little leſs to be deprecated than thoſe which attend the other. It is neceſſary to the happineſs of man to live in ſociety, and in the ſociety of equals with reſpect ro age, circumſtances, and ſituation; but the former of theſe is the equality moſt ſought after by a young perſon; a lad will not long be content with the ſociety of his elders, and it will be difficult to procure him proper companions of his own age, if he be educated at home; it follows then, that he will chooſe for himſelf, and having no alternative, that choice muſt fall upon inferior, and therefore improper perſons; for I fear

a young

a young man's morals will ſtand as little chance of improvement in the ſociety of the kitchen and the ſtable, as his manners, his dialect, and converſation will in that of the ruſtics in the fild. Pride, conceit, and arrogance, are likewiſe too often the effects of ſolitude; the ſon of a man of fortune, living far from his equals in ſtation, accuſtomed to the flattery of domeſtics, and the ſubmiſſion of dependants, thinks himſelf ſuperior to all mankind; and he ſeeks not to gain thoſe qualities which would render him amiable and reſpectable; in the mean time every ſlight diſplay of genius, every little advance in knowledge is extolled as miraculous, he is told he is a prodigy, until he believes it, and then he conſiders application as unneceſſary as it is fatiguing; and ſinks into hopeleſs indolence and ignorance, merely becauſe he imagines himſelf already at the ſummit of perfection. I paſs over awkwardneſs, ruſticity, and many other inconveniences, as not being of much conſequence in themſelves, and being eaſily ſurmountable."

"Alas! then," interrupted Mrs. Montague

tague, in a dejected tone, "how are we to chooſe, both have ſuch great diſadvantages?"

"Great, certainly," rejoined the Doctor; "but not equal; the difference is very obvious; the evils of the public plan anxiety may foreſee, but prudence cannot prevent; while, on the contrary, thoſe of the other mode, by the aſſiſtance of good ſenſe, good-nature, and patience, may be wholly obviated: It will be eaſy to keep your child from low company, until he is too old to be injured by it."

"Certainly," cried Mrs. Montague haſtily, "I ſhall never allow of his aſſociating with my ſervants; nor ſhall I ever ſuffer him to chooſe any companions, without my knowledge and conſent."

"Pardon me, madam," cried the Doctor, "when our object is to allure the inclination and fix the principles, we muſt not uſe reſtraint and ſeverity! this is, I believe, the grand error of perſons who have the care of children; by a needleſs and abſurd auſterity, and by refuſing them trifling gratifications, they render themſelves hateful to them, and then

then are ſurpriſed that their precepts are neglected, and their perſons avoided. I rely upon your goodneſs, madam, to excuſe the liberty I take in enlarging thus far upon this ſubject; but allow me to ſay, I do not think one of the objections which I have ſtated will be at all applicable to the caſe of your nephew, they need indeed only be pointed out to be avoided. I heſitate not, therefore, to pronounce my judgement in favour of private education, and earneſtly to recommend it to your approbation."

Joy again appeared in the eyes of Mrs. Montague, and ſhe was about to thank him in the warmeſt terms for his advice, when Montague himſelf entered the room; he apologiſed very politely for not having attended the Doctor before, alledging as an excuſe his having been detained by buſineſs; then addreſſing himſelf to his wife,

"My dear Cecilia," ſaid he, "you have mentioned to Dr. Evans the favour which I was about to requeſt of him?"

Mrs. Montague bluſhed, heſitated, and then ſtammered out—"No."

"No!"

"No!" repeated he; "what then have you been doing?"

"We have been dſcourſing upon education, and the Doctor has convinced me, that the private plan is the moſt eligible."

"Pſha!" cried Montague, impatiently, "we were convinced of that before: you have not mentioned to him, then, my deſire that he ſhould be a tutor to my Frederic? pardon me, Doctor, but that was the favour which I was about to requeſt."

Delight ſhone in the eyes of that good man.—"The favour will be done to me;" cried he, "nothing can give me greater happineſs than to undertake ſo pleaſing a charge."

Mrs. Montague forgot, in her gratitude to him for thus kindly complying with her requeſt, the ſhock ſhe received from the rude abrupt manner in which her huſband had made it; for which, however, ſhe endeavoured to atone by the moſt ſincere expreſſions of gratitude.

Every thing was ſettled, and Dr. Evans was immediately to commence the inſtructor of Frederic.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

FREDERIC was now in his ſixth year, and already began to ſhew a lively reſemblance to his mother in the beauty of his perſon; and although he inherited the warmth of temper of his father, yet were the mildneſs, the gentleneſs, and good-nature of Emmeline equally apparent; and Doctor Evans was not diſappointed in the pleaſure which he had promiſed himſelf in the care of his education; the extreme quickneſs of conception, the tenacity of memory, and patient application of Frederic, left him very little care or trouble.

Mrs. Montague had not quite ſo eaſy a taſk with her little Cecilia; all life and ſpirit, no evil was ſo tremendous to her as a minute's confinement; and it was far more delightful to her to interrupt her brother, (as ſhe was inſtructed to call him) in his ſtudies, to ſteal his

his books in order to provoke a game of romps, or to be preſent when Dr. Evans was attending him, than to ſit at needle-work, or the harpſichord with her mother.

Her quickneſs, however, at thoſe moments when ſhe choſe to apply, compenſated amply for this levity; and her mother could not regret a livelineſs which rendered her more amiable, while it did not materially retard her improvement.

Montague himſelf was by far too much engaged in more intereſting affairs, to pay much attention to ſuch inſignificant things as children. All his thoughts were employed in reflecting, and his ſpeech in diſcuſſing and fiercely diſputing with his ſiſter on the nature, origin, progreſs, and probable effects of the unhappy riots which happened about this time, accompanied with many ingenious and uſeful hints upon the modes of prevention, which had unfortunately been neglected on that occaſion.

Upon theſe modes, however, Margaret and himſelf could not concur; and as a dreadful quarrel, ariſing from the unfortunate

nate war with America, was by no means reconciled; ſome ſarcaſms thrown on the miniſtry by Miſs Montague, being highly reſented by her brother, dreadful animoſities took place.

Although Mrs. Montague uſually retired at the beginning of theſe conflicts, yet, as ſhe never failed to hear every ſpeech, and every expreſſion repeated to her with all their original acrimony, by her huſband, ſhe ſuffered almoſt equally from them as if ſhe had been preſent. Many times ſhe would retire to lament in ſolitude her unhappy ſituation, and to regret, with unavailing anguiſh, the happy hours of her childhood, which ſhe had ſpent in the midſt of gay ſociety, and in the company of the kindeſt and moſt indulgent parents; but juſt as ſhe was on the point of ſinking into deſpair, ſhe would recollect her lovely children, their beauty and their promiſing talents; hope revived in her boſom, and ſhe reproached herſelf for complaining, while in poſſeſſion of treaſures ſo ineſtimable.

A circumſtance now happened, which in a great

a great meaſure put a ſtop to theſe uncomfortable affairs; Montague diſcovered an employment, equally new and amuſing; this was agriculture; the tenant of one of the farms on his eſtate dying, he determined to take the management of it into his own hands.

Wonderful was the change which this new ſcheme wrought in Montague; from being dull, ſilent, and moroſe, he became cheerful, talkative, and gay; nothing was to be heard, to be liſtened to, or to be ſpoken of, but *his* crops, *his* cattle, *his* land, and *his* workmen, and on theſe topics he was inexhauſtible; in ſhort, from being terrible and odious, he was now become merely fatiguing. Entire peace however, was impoſſible; Miſs Montague, who never choſe to be a cypher, at the ſame time declared a taſte for agriculture, and purchaſed and read every book on that ſubject.

This, of courſe, gave opportunities for new diſputes, which, however, having neither religion nor politics for their ground, were managed without fierceueſs, and without acrimony.

Frederic

Frederic, in the mean time, increaſed every year in the beauty of his perſon, and goodneſs of his underſtanding; but as his diſpoſition unfolded itſelf, melancholy was the predominant feature; far from ſeeking improper company as a relief, he rather courted ſolitude, as congenial to the natural temper of his mind; yet diſcontent often intruded itſelf upon him; he had read the deſcription of the pleaſures of ſociety, and he ſighed to reflect, that he alone was denied a happineſs of which he could conceive the idea, although he had not taſted the enjoyment. While in company with Mrs. Montague, or the amiable Cecilia, however, this melancholy and diſſatisfaction for a while was diſſipated, and he was cheerful and happy; but as his years advanced, even this ſource was dried up. Mrs. Montague, although kind and gentle, was certainly far from being a companion to a young man of nineteen; the natural evenneſs of her temper, by conſtant vexation and uneaſineſs, was conſiderably impaired, and in the mind of the unhappy, anxiety will always wear the face of ill-nature;

ture; there was not this objection indeed to Cecilia; but although her ſweet temper and lively wit were in general the ſource of delight to him; yet there were hours, when her conſtant cheerfulneſs but ill accorded with that helpleſs melancholy which had grown upon his temper.

When his ſtudies, which were now his chief relief, were at an end for the day, he delighted to walk out alone, with Horace or Anacreon in his pocket, to ſome wild place, and there ſeek relief from reflection in thoſe elegant authors.

Not far from the hall was the field which was the boundary of the farm of Montague; this ſtood on a lofty eminence, and commanded a proſpect at once noble and beautiful; a vaſt valley extended itſelf below, rich with variety of cultivation, and diverſified with woodland; through the middle, a ſmall river ſlowly wound its courſe, and beyond, ſeveral hills reared their heads to the horizon, leaving between them clefts through which the broad waters of the Thames, ſoon to be united with the ocean, appeared

covered with every variety of ſhipping; the blue hills of Kent, almoſt loſt in diſtance, bounded the proſpect: by the ſide of the field was a little copſe, in which, under a large oak, a rough ſeat was placed, over which the ſweet briar, the wild honeyſuckle, and the clematis were trained, and hung down in beautiful luxuriance. This ſeat was the conſtant reſort of Frederic; and while he ſaw the ploughman, the mower, or the reaper, at work in the valley below, he would envy their cheerful ſong.

"Ah!" he would ſay, with a ſigh, "they are bleſſed with ſociety;—when their labour is done, they can ſpend the merry evening together!—while I!——" a tear ſtarted to his eye, and he turned to his Anacreon, and tried, with that lively author, to "diſſipate his ſorrows."

Mrs. Montague obſerved, with concern, this unhappy diſpoſition; ſhe loved Frederic with the affection of a mother, and felt for his ſorrows with all a mother's tenderneſs; ſhe ſpoke to Doctor Evans, and to that ſenſible and amiable man, regretted the ſadneſs of her nephew. "Ah,

"Ah, Doctor!" ſaid ſhe, "I have ſacrificed my poor Frederic's happineſs to my own inclination; his heart is the victim of melancholy from the ſolitude in which we have kept him; this is an evil which you did not predict."

"I have obſerved it, madam," anſwered the Doctor, "with great concern; but ſurely even this is better than vice; I had rather hear the melancholy ſigh, than the weak and idle mirth of folly, or the loud unfeeling laughter of thoughtleſſneſs and impiety: but do not deſpair, Frederic is open to conviction, and I believe, the ſource of his preſent uneaſineſs, is an error in judgment; for he need only ſee the world to enjoy his preſent ſituation."

"You always give me comfort, Doctor," cried Mrs. Montague; go to him then, and let me ſee a ſmile once more upon my dear Frederic's face."

At the time of this complaint, Frederic was gone to his favourite ſeat, and thither Doctor Evans followed him. He approached without being obſerved. Frederic at that

time was deeply engaged with his favourite ode, the melancholy "Eheu! fugaces," of Horace; and as he read, the tears fell upon the book.

Dr. Evans ſeated himſelf beſide him; Frederic ſtarted, and cloſed the book.

"Dr. Evans!" cried he," I did not expect to ſee you here;"

"I was obſerving the beauty of the proſpect; upon my word, you have choſen a charming ſpot for your meditations; but why ſo melancholy, Frederic?"

"I have been reading one of the moſt beautiful, but certainly one of the moſt melancholy, of the odes of Horace."

"And is that the ſole cauſe? you are not always reading that ode?"

Frederic bluſhed, heſitated, and was ſilent.

"You certainly are ſo," purſued the Doctor, "upon ſome other account."

"Alas! ſir," cried Frederic, ſighing, have I not reaſon?"

"None, that I can conceive."

"Am I not alone, ſecluded from the reſt on a n kind almoſt?—and—"

"What!

"What!" interrupted the Doctor, "have you not the kindeſt friends?"

"It is true," cried Frederic; "but are thoſe friends, or can they, be companions for me?"

"And why not?"

"Ah! ſir, you are the only perſon to whom I dare anſwer that queſtion; and even with you, I fear I ſhall be charged with the crime of ingratitude. Let me begin with my aunt; can I avoid obſerving her cauſeleſs and implacable hatred to me? how many bitter ſpeeches has ſhe occaſioned from her brother to me? and Mr. Montague himſelf; how often has he reproached me with my poor mother's faults, and (I bluſh for him while I ſpeak it) with his care of me? can I be happy with ſuch people?"

"Allowing what you ſay to be juſt, in regard to them; yet ſurely no objection can be applied to Mrs. Montague, or the amiable Cecilia."

Mrs. Montague is indeed entirely amiable; but—"

"But! ſurely you can have no objection to offer to her?" "Oh

"Oh no, ſir, it is merely to myſelf; I certainly feel for her more love than for any perſon upon earth; but I have not the good fortune to pleaſe her; ſhe is always unhappy, and my preſence and my words ſeem to make her more ſo. Oh, ſir! I am a miſerable out-caſt, an iſland, in a great ocean, with whom the reſt of the world has no connection; I hang a miſerable dead weight upon the compaſſion of this family! yes, yes, I every day feel I am a dependant!—but, oh! how happy ſhould I be to hold the plough, or fill the cart, if I could but earn ſubſiſtence, rather than owe fortune to thoſe who are capable of reproaching me with the want of it."

Dr. Evans liſtened to him with attention and concern; and when he had concluded—

"My dear Frederic," ſaid he, "why will you thus allow your fancy to outrun your reaſon? you have ſuffered yourſelf to conſider your ſituation miſerable, until you have really made it ſo."

"If you could ſee my heart, ſir," cried Frederic,

Friederic, with ſome warmth, "you would not miſtake real feeling for fancy."

"I can, and I do, ſee your heart, returned the Doctor, "and I can perceive, that it ſuffers from the error of fancy; do not ſuppoſe that I conſider you ſo weak as to be convinced by aſſertion, without proof; but, if you will have patience to liſten, I think you will ſee, and confeſs your error. You complain of Mr. Montague, and his ſiſter, principally, I think, of the ſeverity of their temper; and have you well conſidered the cauſe which may have injured tempers perhaps naturally good? and might you not make allowance for thoſe who have ſuffered ſorrows, troubles, and diſappointments, ſuch as you have never known?"

"Pardon me, ſir," interrupted Frederic, "I did not complain: feeling, I could not avoid; no power, no ſeverity can check that; but I never uttered a complaint, until you extorted it from me; I had no right."

"Your very manner of expreſſion ſhews reſentment, and implies reproach."

"My manner of expreſſion then is unfortunate."

"Ra her

"Rather ſay, the idea which ſuggeſted it. You ſay you do not complain; do not your melancholy looks, your frequent abſence, your ſeeking ſolitude, your avoiding your family, do not theſe ſpeak louder complaints than can be uttered by the tongue? but, be that as it may, my object is not to reproach, but to convince you; why then ſhould you reſent, or rather why ſhould you feel a few ſevere expreſſions, which rather proceed from ſome uneaſineſs of the moment, than any particular anger againſt yourſelf? I think your own heart will urge you to forgive little weakneſſes in thoſe who love you ſo well; and to boaſt of favours conferred, is a weakneſs from which few are at all times exempt. Do not then expoſe yourſelf to there proaches of that heart, for ſuffering yourſelf to deſpiſe where you ought to love. I am ſorry to hear your objection to the company of Mrs. Montague; and is it for her love of you that you avoid her? is it becauſe ſhe is unhappy at the fixed melancholy of your countenance, that you increaſe that unhappineſs, by avoiding, by neglecting her?

Theſe

Theſe keen reproofs ſunk to the heart of Frederic.—" No, ſir," cried he with vehemence, " no, never will I add to the unhappineſs of that beſt of woman, the deareſt, the only friend I have on earth; whatever ſorrow is in my heart, never again ſhall it appear in my countenance."

" It were cruel, indeed," purſued the Doctor, " to demand ſuch a ſacrifice; to give up the laſt conſolation of the unhappy, the hope of pity and of ſympathy."

" What then," cried Frederic, with impatience, " would you have me do?"

" Diſmiſs from your mind the cauſe of your unhappineſs: I will explain it to you; you have conceived an amiable, a flattering, and of courſe a deceitful idea of the world; you have imagined nothing ſo terrible as your ſolitary ſituation; you think yourſelf ſecluded from the enjoyments of ſociety, and particularly you wiſh for companions of your own age: and, would you not ſuffer from ſlighted or forſaken friendſhip? could you ſee virtue and religion neglected, ridiculed, deſpiſed, without pain? few, very few, (I

grieve to ſay it) are the young men of your own age from whom theſe things are not to be expected; and when for ſuch ſociety you had exchanged that of the amiable and affectionate Mrs. Montague, and the gentle innocent Cecilia, would you not feel regret? you ſigh for independence, and envy the ploughman, and the carter; and are the delights of learning and of ſcience ſo very low in your eſtimation, that you would exchange them for the groſs obſcene jeſt, or drunken revel, which compoſe the happineſs of ſociety among the common people? and would the phantom independence compenſate for the loſs? do not deceive yourſelf, happineſs is confined to no rank of life, to no ſituation, to no external circumſtance, no body will meet with it on earth; but it is in the power of every one to make it. The beginnings of melancholy are as much to be avoided as the beginnings of ſin; like them they are ſweet, but, like them, they are dangerous and pernicious: to indulge a penſive turn of mind, appears amiable and delightful; but it imperceptibly grows until it wears

wears the face of real miſery, and from this miſery not even virtue itſelf can deliver us. Let us then diſpel the phantom before it be grown too mighty, let us fairly weigh the happy circumſtances of our ſituation with the unhappy: in general, I believe, we ſhall find that the former preponderate; on the latter then let us not ſuffer our imaginations to dwell, ſince vexation, ſorrow, and pain cannot be alleviated by reflection, but muſt be increaſed; but, while our minds dwell on happineſs, our cares are forgotten; every fair circumſtance encreaſes in lovelineſs in our imagination, as, while we contemplate the dawn, the horrors of night paſs gradually away.- From this happy diſpoſition of mind, I have ſeen cheerfulneſs in the midſt of ſeeming wretchedneſs; from the contrary, I obſerve you, bleſt with all the advantages of fortune, of health, of friends, with every wiſh prevented, ſinking in deſpondence! Rouſe yourſelf, my dear Frederic, exert your natural underſtanding, and no longer ungratefully receive the bleſſings of Providence."

Frederic liſtened with gratitude and conviction; he preſſed the Doctor's hand, and thanked him for his kind advice; then both aroſe, and haſtened to return to the hall.

CHAP. IX.

AS ſoon as they reached the grounds, they ſeparated, and Frederic proceeded immediately to the houſe. In the great walk he met Cecilia, who, paſſing him with a grave air, pretended not to obſerve him.

"Cecilia," cried Frederic, "whither are you going?"

"To ſuitable company," cried ſhe.

"And is that your reaſon for avoiding me?"

"Oh, you muſt know I am in a very benign temper, and I have been diſcourſing in a ſweet, lively manner; but it was all thrown away, for I unfortunately was talking to my aunt."

"And what then?" cried Frederic.

"Why you know my aunt is a democrat; well, ſhe had been deſcanting upon rights of man, ſocial happineſs, neceſſary violence, and the bleſſings of the revolution in France, when I interrupted her, and adviſed a journey thither; for, added I, although your loſs will be ſeverely felt by us, and though your abſence will give us ſerious concern, yet we ought not to be ſo ſelfiſh, nor you ſo generous, as to prefer our gratification to your happineſs; now my father, who is always making miſtakes, was ſo odd as to laugh, and my aunt unfortunately, (ſhe is apt to miſconſtrue one's beſt intentions) took it amiſs, and was rather vociferous upon the occaſion; and ſo my father grew croſs, as uſual, and my mother dull, and——"

"Well," interrupted Frederic, "but what had I done, that you were hurrying away ſo faſt?"

"Oh, as to you, I have given you up long ago, and I am now going to enjoy the company, of the only cheerful agreeable perſon about the houſe—myſelf."

"Well, but Cecilia, I am going to be cheerful too, ſo you will admit me in your party."

"Eh! what was that? let me look at you again;—as true as I live you ſmile: what! are there any hopes I ſhall not be moped to death?—Frederic, do you know why my aunt is an old maid?"

"My dear Cecilia—"

"Pſha, your dear Cecilia!—why, I never called you my dear Frederic in my life, and yet you are ſenſible what an affectionate ſiſter I am. Well, but ſetting that aſide, don't you think that, all things conſidered, my aunt is a little unpleaſant? now anſwer truly, Frederic; no hypocriſy, is ſhe not a croſs, diſagreeable old maid?"

"And cannot you form your own opinion of her, without conſulting mine?"

"Oh, mine is pretty well fixed; but I can't endure your caution; I ſay my aunt is a croſs old thing, and I can't bear her, except when ſhe is diſputing with my father, and then it is delightful; now confeſs, are they not very well met?"

"Ought

"Ought you to ſpeak thus of your father, Cecilia?"

"Oh dear, no; my father is neither ridiculous, nor unreaſonable; he and my aunt neither diſpute nor quarrel upon things which do not concern them; ſhe neither terrifies us with eulogiums on murders, broiled hearts, and blood of deſpots glorioufly ſpilt; nor he wearies us with ſubordination, and kings, and miniſters, and ſtate affairs, and a variety of things which nobody cares about;—ah, no, no, no, you are right; they are two charming agreeable people, very much ſo."

"For ſhame, for ſhame, Cecilia, I muſt not hear you talk ſo."

"Oh, what, I ſpeak too hardly of my father and my aunt; and yet perhaps you would not ſuſpect, that I do not think them half ſo fatiguing as yourſelf, Dr. Evans, and my mother."

"Upon my word, we are much obliged to you, but how ſo?"

"Why, quiet, eaſy, dull people, are the moſt tireſome things in the world; now with my

my father and my aunt I have a ſettled plan of conduct; with him, I have nothing to do but praiſe the revolution, and the national aſſembly; with her, divine right, kings, and prerogative, and the converſation is ſure to be animated: now I have ſtudied you three, and cannot poſſibly diſcover your party; and I am wearied out with—'yes certainly," "oh, to be ſure," and all theſe eaſy expreſſions, without a ſingle contradiction, to enliven and ſpur on the imagination."

"And pray what party may you be of yourſelf?"

"That is entirely regulated by the people I am with."

"Indeed! are you ſo conformable?"

"Yes, I make it a rule always to be of the oppoſite party."

"What, have you no party of your own?"

"Parties," anſwered Cecilia, with ſome gravity, "are at preſent you know divided into ariſtocrat, and democrat; and there are ſo many abſurdities on both ſides, that no reaſonable perſon can ſeriouſly and honeſtly adhere to either."

"There

"There I perfectly agree with you, my dear Cecilia," ſaid Frederic.

"Agree with me! inſufferable! oh that is too ſtupid to be borne; I have done with you," and with that away ſhe ran.

Frederic looked after her, laughing, and then proceeded to the houſe. And now he reflected at leiſure on the arguments of Dr. Evans; he had felt convinced; but it is not argument alone which can root out long eſtabliſhed errors; and, in order to deſpiſe the evils of fancy, it is neceſſary to have taſted thoſe of reality, and of ſuch Frederic was wholly ignorant. He no longer, indeed, appeared with that fixed dejection in his countenance, yet ſtill in his heart he ſecretly nouriſhed diſcontent.

It was early on a beautiful morning, at the latter end of June, when Frederic once more repaired to his favourite ſeat, which he had not viſited for ſome time: during his abſence, the graſs had been mown, and the hay was now ready to be carted; he had not long been ſeated, when he perceived the waggon entering the field, accompanied by the

the peaſants, whoſe mirth and laughter again excited his envy.

"Surely," ſaid he, "theſe people muſt be happy; and, if happy, innocent, and of courſe Dr. Evans's deſcription of them muſt be erroneous."

He reſolved to go and ſpeak with them, and, if poſſible, to learn the truth, not without a latent hope, to prove by the falſehood of this deſcription, the errors of the reſt of the arguments of Dr. Evans; ſo much did he labour to prove himſelf unhappy, or at leaſt to juſtify his appearing ſo.

As Frederic had hitherto not much entered into the taſte of Montague for agriculture, he underſtood very little of its concerns, and of the perſons engaged in it he knew ſtill leſs; he felt therefore a great awkwardneſs in addreſſing them; but, as perſeverance was one of his principal characteriſtics, it was no ſlight cauſe would make him drop an idea once formed. He was, however, much pleaſed to obſerve among the men the ſon of his nurſe, with whom he had kept up as much intimacy, as his high

ideas

ideas of the diſtinction of rank, which had been inſtilled into him with great pains by Mrs. Montague, would allow; but, as his new ſcheme required a change of behaviour, he now laid aſide his uſual haughtineſs, and endeavoured to aſſume familiarity.

After ſaluting them with great civility; he began addreſſing the ſon of Patty upon the nature of his buſineſs, and particularly what reſpected the hay: with his anſwers the prejudiced Frederic thought himſelf much pleaſed, and already began erecting in his mind what he judged would be a formidable battery againſt the arguments of his friend. He was however pleaſed with two things in the converſation of Edward, to which he had been but little accuſtomed, theſe were reſpect and civility; and he felt himſelf extremely happy with his new acquaintance; he even began to wiſh to join in his labour: this was eaſily accompliſhed, every one was ready to hand him the fork, and he exerted himſelf with all the vivacity which novelty and caprice could inſpire; in vain did the ſun pour down his meridian heat,

heat, in vain did the probable anxiety of the family at the hall at his long abſence croſs his mind; unwearied, undaunted, and inflexible, he endured the one, and drove away reflection upon the other.

To dine under the ſhade of trees upon the graſs, was highly romantic, it was Arcadian; but there was another conſideration, which added ſweetneſs to the repaſt; he ſeemed by his labour to have earned it, and for once did not altogether owe it to the oſtentatious generoſity of a man whom he could not eſteem.

It was not before the ſun had ſunk below the horiſon, and the laſt lock of hay was laid upon the waggon, that Frederic could prevail upon himſelf to quit the field; at length, however, after heartily wiſhing his comrades good-night, and promiſing to join them on the morrow, he turned his ſteps towards the hall.

The evening was beautiful, and the cool air, perfumed by the hay, the wild roſe, and the honeyſuckle, after the ſultry day, was refreſhing and delightful; Frederic felt his ſpirits

ſpirits more elevated and cheerful than he had ever known them before.

"Happy men!" cried he, as he walked ſlowly on, "bleſt with independence, health, and content, you have none to thank but the Almighty, and your own hands, for ſubſiſtence; no haughty patron can reproach you with kindneſs which he never feels! the future gives you no concern, the preſent no unhappineſs; your very labour is delight, and mirth and good humour crown your happy evenings: are theſe the men who, void of feeling and of virtue, ſeek for gratification in drunkenneſs and debauchery alone? truly," continued he, ſmiling, "the Doctor ſhould have been more acquainted with his ſubject before he aſſerted quite ſo poſitively. I am happy that I have made the experiment; I am ſtill more happy that I made the diſcovery: I have been a long while melancholy, and Mrs. Montague has endeavoured by reproach, Cecilia by ridicule, and Dr. Evans by argument, to convince me that I ought to be otherwiſe, and I have to-day, myſelf, diſcovered the means of becoming ſo."

He was diſturbed in the midſt of theſe reflections, by the noiſe of a chair, which had ſcarce paſſed him, when, by the unſkilfulneſs of the driver, it ran up a high bank, and was overturned with great violence, as the horſe had been nearly at full ſpeed.

Frederic ran immediately to the aſſiſtance of the unfortunate perſons, but unhappily arrived too late to prevent a young lady from being precipitated to ſome diſtance on the ground; her fall was however, much broken by the long graſs and ruſhes which grew by the road ſide; when however Frederic raiſed her in his arms, ſhe had fainted; his concern for her did not prevent his turning his eyes to the chair; here a ſhocking ſight preſented itſelf; the unfortunate man, entangled in the reins, had been thrown underneath, and lay at the mercy of the horſe, who was kicking at him with great violence; his blood ran on the ground, and the groans of the miſerable ſufferer pierced Frederic to the heart.

Unwilling to quit the lady, yet ſhocked to ſee any perſon in ſo dreadful a ſituation without

without affording him aſſiſtance, Frederic remained in the moſt diſtracting perplexity, when, to his great ſatisfaction, he perceived a perſon coming along the road at ſome diſtance. Frederic called aloud, and the man, quickening his pace, ſoon arrived, and he diſcovered it to be one of his comrades in the hay-field; it was not however Edward, but another, whoſe ſurlineſs and incivility had much diſguſted Frederic.

The young man no ſooner obſerved how affairs ſtood, than with great coolneſs and intrepidity he advanced to the chair, and with one wrench, tore aſunder the under ſhaft, which had been much ſhattered in the fall, then lifted the chair, and raiſing the unfortunate man in his arms, carried him to ſome diſtance and laid him gently on the graſs; upon examination, finding his leg much broken, he took his handkerchief from his neck, and bound it round as well as he could; then addreſſing Frederic,

"And now, Mr. Oſmond," ſaid he, "what can we do?"

"I know not, anſwered Frederic, much diſtreſſed

diſtreſſed, unleſs we could convey him to the farm-houſe."

"Why," anſwered the other, "the waggon is juſt behind, and they can get a cart or ſomething to carry him home, while I run for the doctor."

"Do ſo then," ſaid Frederic; "but no, ſtay, run firſt and get ſome aſſiſtance for this lady, and ſend the firſt perſon you meet for the ſurgeon, and pray make haſte."

The man was out of ſight in an inſtant: the waggon arriving, Frederic diſpatched Edward for a cart, promiſing himſelf to ſtand by the horſes; Edward inſtantly obeyed.

And now Frederic was left alone, to the contemplation of the ſcene around him. It was twilight; on one ſide of him, lay the miſerable man, groaning in agony, while the ſtreams of blood were juſt diſcernable by the faint light gleaming through the trees, which in that part overhung the road; the unfortunate lady ſtill continued inſenſible, and her pale countenance reſembled that of a corpſe; near him ſtood the loaded waggon

gon with four high-ſpirited horſes, who, terrified by the ſcene before them, began to ſnort and plunge furiouſly.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried the affrighted Frederic, "what can I do? what a ſcene of horror! and this unhappy lady will die, before I can aſſiſt her."

The horſes now plunged with more fury than ever, and had actually attempted to run away with the waggon. There was now no alternative, Frederic was obliged to quit his charge; he laid her gently by her fellow-ſufferer, and caught the halter of the fore horſe, juſt as he was on the point of trampling the miſerable man under his feet. Frederic was poſſeſſed of great courage and activity, but inſufficient to reſtrain the violence of the irritated and terrified horſes, who, ignorant of his voice, and regardleſs of his reſtraint, or the weight of the load, hurried madly on; but Frederic would not quit his hold, but was borne-along a conſiderable way down the road, until the ſhafts giving way, were torn from the waggon, and the horſe which Frederic held plunging, wrenched the

the halter from his hand, and threw him violently to the ground. Though much bruiſed, and ſomewhat ſtunned by the fall, Frederic preſently aroſe, and recollecting the ſituation of the ſtrangers, ran back with great haſte.

When he arrived, he perceived the young man ſupporting the lady on the ground, while a woman was holding ſomething to her mouth; Frederic obſerved with great ſatisfaction, that ſhe appeared much recovered; he approached her, and expreſſed his apprehenſions that ſhe had ſuffered by the accident; ſhe merely replied, by an anxious enquiry after her fellow-ſufferer.

"We will take every care of him," ſaid Frederic; "be not alarmed, madam; he is not I hope much hurt."

"But, Miſs," ſaid the woman, "do take a little more, it will do you good."

"I thank you, no," returned the lady, "I am much better; I will riſe."

Frederic offering his hand to aſſiſt her, ſhe ſtood up—"Will you permit me," ſaid he, "to ſend for the chariot to conduct you

you to Montague-hall this evening, and to-morrow——"

"You are very kind, ſir; but as it is but a mile and a half to L——, I can eaſily walk thither."

"But, Miſs Nevil," ſaid the young man, "had we not better carry old Mr. Haywood home?"

"Carry!" repeated the lady, "heavens! is he ſo much hurt?"

Then obſerving him, ſhe ſhrieked with much terror; Frederic entreated her not to be alarmed, and again aſſured her that every care ſhould be taken, and the cart now appearing, Frederic aſſiſted to lift him in, and then deſiring Edward to be very careful, and requeſting the woman to ſend ſomebody to prepare the family of Haywood for his reception, he diſmiſſed them; then turning to the lady,

"Will Miſs Nevil excuſe my boldneſs," cried he, "in offering to accompany her home."

"I ſhould be extremely ſorroy," returned ſhe, "to add ſo unneceſſarily to the trouble which I have already been ſo unfortunate as

to give you; the way, as I obſerved before, is ſo ſhort."

Frederic, however, inſiſted upon accompanying her; and, after apologizing again for the trouble ſhe gave him, Miſs Nevil conſented.

Frederic then called the young man, with whoſe behaviour he was much pleaſed.

"My good fellow," ſaid he, "I have given you much trouble, there is a trifle for you," offering him half a guinea.

The man looked at it ſome time, and then at Frederic, with much ſurpriſe; then putting it back with his hand,—"No, no, ſir," ſaid he, "take back your money; if you've a mind to order us a cup of ale, it is all very well."

Somewhat offended at the manner of this ſpeech, Frederic, rather angrily, again offered him the money, inſiſting upon paying him for his trouble.

"And pray," ſaid he, ſtill refuſing it, "what is to pay you for your's?"

"Me!" cried Frederic, "the pleaſure of having it in my power to afford aſſiſtance in diſtreſs." "Very

"Very well, ſir, then if you are ſatisfied, ſo am I."

And with that he was walking away with great indifference; but Frederic, always reſolute, and particularly ſo when urged by his feelings, ordered him to ſtop, in a peremptory tone.

"Young man," ſaid he, "I do not unſtand this; I inſiſt on your accepting what I offer you."

The man heſitated; then, ſtarting, as at a ſudden thought, took the money eagerly; then earneſtly, and with the utmoſt gratitude, thanked Frederic, and was out of ſight in an inſtant.

CHAP. X.

FREDERIC apologized to Miſs Nevil for detaining her, and both purſued the path for ſome time in ſilence.

"Heavens!" cried Frederic, at length,

" what folly I have been guilty of; I ſhould have ſent the young man to acquaint your family with your ſafety; they muſt, doubtleſs be very uneaſy on your account."

" You are extremely kind," anſwered Miſs Nevil; " but my mother will have no ground for uneaſineſs, as ſhe did not expect me until a late hour."

" I am very happy to hear it," returned Frederic; " then, but for the misfortune of Mr. Haywood, I ſhould have no cauſe to be concerned for an accident, ſome of the conſequences of which I ſhould be very loth to regret."

" Certainly, independent of that circumſtance, the affair would have been of no conſequence."

" Of no ill conſequence, I grant; but I cannot allow the event which introduced me to ſo great a pleaſure as the acquaintance of Miſs Nevil, to be by any means unimportant.'

"Nor without its diſagreeable conſequences," returned ſhe, " to me the regret of occaſioning ſo much trouble to you the unpleaſant taſk,

taſk, which your politeneſs induces you to impoſe upon yourſelf."

"Rather," ſaid Frederic, "accuſe me of too much ſelf-love, in not only deſiring a walk in ſo ſweet an evening, but not being content without company congenial to it."

"The evening is, indeed, delightful, but as it will be late before you return, I fear your walk home will be far otherwiſe."

"By compariſon it certainly will be ſo; but I ſhould be abſurd not to purſue happineſs, becauſe it muſt ſuffer diminution, and unreaſonable to expect it always to be equal."

"I find, ſir," ſaid Miſs Nevil, "that, while you will not ſuffer me to own obligation, you will increaſe it by endeavouring to prevent my feeling it."

"Or rather," retorted Frederic, "whatever happineſs I feel, you wiſh, by reproof, to prevent me from enjoying aloud."

"I ſhould be very ungrateful to wiſh to prevent your happineſs in any way; but I cannot allow acknowledgements of advantage which is at leaſt reciprocal."

"There I muſt beg your pardon," cried Frederic, ſomewhat gravely, "ſociety is a bleſſing of which Miſs Nevil is not ſo deſtitute as to rejoice ſo much at an addition to it, as one ſo forlorn, ſo ſolitary, as myſelf; but" continued he, recollecting himſelf, "inſtead of your reproof for rejoicing aloud, I fear I ſhall ſubject myſelf to one much more juſt for complaining in the ſame ſtyle."

Much ſurpriſed at this ſpeech, and more ſo at the ſudden gravity in the manner of her new acquaintance; Miſs Nevil looked at Frederic with earneſtneſs, expecting an explanation; but in the pauſe which this occaſioned, the converſation dropped, and ſhe had not courage to make an effort to renew it; Frederic however ſpared her the trouble, and they converſed upon common topics until they arrived within ſight of the houſe of Mrs. Nevil; it was a neat farm-houſe, ſituated on an eminence, ſhaded by innumerable trees, above whoſe branches, at a little diſtance, the ſmall ſpire of the chapel of L——, juſt appeared.

Miſs Nevil invited Frederic to enter and refreſh

refreſh himſelf, and his own inclination ſeconded her offer too powerfully for him to reſiſt following her in; he was introduced to a lady as her mother, whoſe appearance prepoſſeſſed him in her favour.

Mrs. Nevil was the daughter of a man of rank and faſhion; but having married, rather according to the dictates of inclination, than thoſe either of pride or prudence; ſhe had been much diſtreſſed, when left a widow, with a ſmall ſum, and an infant daughter to ſupport; rejected by her family, ſhe had been reduced to the neceſſity of hiring a ſmall farm for ſubſiſtence; but had taken great pains to give her daughter every accompliſhment which ſhe poſſeſſed herſelf; and having experienced the miſerable conſequence of preferring inclination to prudence, her chief care was to provide for her daughter a proper eſtabliſhment; that is to ſay, a huſband whoſe chief, or, if it happened ſo, ſole recommendation was ſuperior wealth; and where her want of fortune would be overlooked in conſideration of her ſuperior rank and accompliſhments: with this intent,

ſhe had fixed her attention upon the ſon of Haywood. Haywood had riſen from the rank of a ploughman by extraordinary induſtry and good fortune, to the poſſeſſion of great wealth; and a ſon and a daughter were the only perſons to ſhare it; but, as Miſs Nevil had always oppoſed this ſcheme, her mother, whoſe ſole view was her happineſs, did not ſtrenuouſly urge it, but yet would not be prevailed upon entirely to give up the connection.

The heart and underſtanding of Mrs. Nevil reflected credit on each other; elegant and eaſy in her manners, kind and conceding on proper occaſions, yet no leſs firm and reſolved in what ſhe judged right, and ſeldom did her judgment miſlead her; ſhe was alike calculated to inſpire affection, and raiſe reſpect; with uncommon patience and perſeverance, ſhe had herſelf conducted her daughter's education, and formed her manners; while, with great ſpirit, ſhe carried on her buſineſs, forgetful of her former rank and former pride. Such was the lady to whom Frederic was introduced.

Miſs

Miſs Nevil related the adventure of the evening, to which her mother liſtened with great anxiety; and at its concluſion, thanked Frederic in the warmeſt terms of gratitude for his aſſiſtance; at the ſame time lamenting the misfortune of Haywood, and blaming her daughter for intruſting herſelf to his care.

Frederic's attention was, however, too much engaged by another object to liſten much to this diſcourſe; the beauty and elegance of Miſs Nevil had at the ſame time rivetted his eyes, and engroſſed his ideas.

Emma was above ſeventeen; her light form, reſembling that of a nymph, was diſplayed to the utmoſt advantage by the neat ſimplicity of her dreſs; her face owed not it's ſole advantage to the regularity of its features, but rather to that expreſſion of ſenſe which ſparkled in her eyes, ſoftened by a penſive air; which was the more attractive to Frederic, as it ſeemed to beſpeak ſentiments in uniſon with his own: her features were delicate and lovely; her complexion in general diſplayed the glowing bloom of

health, but at preſent was ſeen to great diſadvantage, owing to her fright and fatigue. This was obſerved with much concern by her mother, who propoſed her immediately retiring; and Frederic, unwilling to intrude, in a ſhort time reluctantly took his leave, and haſtened towards the hall.

Miſs Nevil had made a great impreſſion upon him; her converſation had charmed him before he had ſeen her countenance, which had by no means inclined him to change his ſentiment. While theſe things paſſed in his mind, his heart grew much more cheerful; he began to think the arguments of Doctor Evans had ſome weight, and that happineſs might be poſſible, even for him.

The acquaintance of Mrs. and Miſs Nevil he thought would be a great addition to their party; and he doubted not but that Mrs. Montague and Cecilia would rejoice in ſuch an acquiſition.

Filled with theſe ideas, Frederic arrived at the park gate; here he was much ſurpriſed to meet a ſervant breathleſs with haſte and terror.

"Good

"Good God! Mr. Frederic," cried he, "is it you? are you come back?" and without waiting for an anſwer, hurried back again to the hall: much aſtoniſhed, and ſomewhat alarmed, Frederic ran with his utmoſt ſpeed to the front door, and finding it open, he flew up ſtairs to the drawing room. Here a ſcene preſented itſelf, which at once perplexed, diſtreſſed, and alarmed him. The firſt object which preſented itſelf was Mr. Montague, who ſat in fierce and ſullen majeſty on one ſide the fire place, his arms folded, and his brows contracted to an unuſual degree of ferocity; he reſembled the dreadful Minos about to paſs the ſentence of eternal miſery. The other ſide was occupied by Miſs Montague, who had drawn herſelf up to more than her accuſtomed ſtiffneſs; her long arms croſſed before her, her mouth contracted to a third of it's uſual ſize, the lips, in that unnatural ſtate of rigidity, ſcarcely viſible, while exulting malice gliſtened in her eyes; near her ſat Mrs. Montague weeping, while Cecilia, with a look

of the greateſt concern, was endeavouring to conſole her.

The only perſon whoſe ſituation ſuffered any change on the appearance of Frederic, was Mrs. Montague; ſhe ſtarted up, as ſoon as ſhe heard him.

"Oh, my dear Frederic!" cried ſhe, "are you at laſt returned?"

"Well, ſir," cried Montague, before Frederic could ſpeak, "what do you think of this?"

"Think, ſir! of what?"

"Of what! why of alarming a family in this manner by your abſurd conduct."

"I am ſorry, ſir, I have alarmed your family; but really I am unconſcious——"

"No impertinence, ſir, if you pleaſe; I would adviſe you to lay aſide that independent manner."

"My dependance, ſir, cried Frederic, colouring, is my misfortune, not my fault."

"Well, ſir, but as you happen to be dependent, you will pleaſe to conſult your own inclination leſs; and pray where have you been all day, not appearing at dinner, and remaining out ſo late in the evening?"

"I am extremely ready to inform you, ſir, anſwered Frederic, ſtruggling to repreſs his riſing anger from appearing in his countenance, "when you will pleaſe to liſten; I have been all day in the hay-field."

Montague was ſoftened at once, or rather forgot his anger, in his eagerneſs in putting queſtions to Frederic relative to his own favourite purſuit, and expreſſed the utmoſt delight upon perceiving that Frederic had imbibed ſome portion of his own taſte for agriculture. Frederic deſcribed his day's employment with much cheerfulneſs and good-humour; for as ſoon as Montague's anger had ſubſided, Frederic forgot his reſentment; when, however, he mentioned his companions, and his intention to join them again on the morrow.

"I am very ſorry to hear it," ſaid Mrs. Montague, in a tone of great diſpleaſure: "Oh, Dr. Evans! you warned me of this in vain; how little did I ſuppoſe with what ſociety you were ſpending the day!"

"Private education!" exclaimed Miſs Montague, with a ſneer.

"Aunt,"

"Aunt," cried Cecilia, "were you ſo good as to ſpeak?"

"And could you, Frederic," continued Mrs. Montague, "find entertainment among ſuch people?"

"Oh, but pray," interrupted Cecilia, "do not let us loſe my aunt's ſpeech; it muſt have been ſomething very clever, or it would not have required ſo much energy of expreſſion, and you are going to let it all be thrown away."

"Nevertheleſs," cried Montague, "I do not chuſe to be affronted by hearing it repeated."

"Now, my dear ſir," returned Cecilia, "the preſent converſation is ſo animated, ſo intereſting, and ſo well ſuited to my aunt's taſte, that it could not fail of reaping by her aid."

Miſs Montague, trembling with rage, yet affecting compoſure, aroſe, and looking at her brother with a fierce air—

"Mr. Montague," cried ſhe, "if you are pleaſed to inſult me yourſelf, it is ſufficient, without encouraging your children to follow your

your example; but, ſir, continued ſhe, unable any longer to control her rage, "I have done with you!" and ſhe flew out of the room, clapping the door with violence.

"Oh dear! oh dear!" cried Cecilia, throwing herſelf back in the chair, and drawing up her elbows with an air of ſatisfaction and careleſſneſs.

"What a horrid thing is paſſion!" obſerved Montague.

"Very much ſo," ſaid Cecilia, in a careleſs tone; "and even thoſe who are moſt ſubject to it, are diſguſted with its effects on othe s."

"It is very true," returned Montague, with a ſerious and unconſcious air.

"Cecilia," ſaid Mrs. Montague, with a look of diſpleaſure, "when you cenſure paſſion, remember that as it is involuntary, and often, perhaps, unavoidable, it may admit of excuſe; but ſatire, as it is premeditated, and its ſole aim is to inflict pain, or to render perſons unconſciouſly ridiculous, can receive none, even if levelled againſt thoſe to whom no reſpect is due: how then is the fault

fault aggravated when the caſe is otherwiſe!"

Cecilia, much hurt by this hint, looked down, and was ſilent; and Mrs. Montague was about to continue her ſpeech to Frederic, when ſhe was prevented by Montague addreſſing him himſelf.

"But, Frederic," ſaid he, "you have been in the hay-field all day, you ſay; where have you been ſince? you did not, I ſuppoſe, work after it was dark?"

"Certainly not," anſwered Frederic, ſmiling; "but of my abſence ſince, I believe I can give a ſtill more ſatisfactory account."

He then related the affair of the evening, concluding with a warm panegyric on Mrs. and Miſs Nevil, and recommending them to the acquaintance of Mrs. Montague and Cecilia.

When he had concluded, Mrs. Montague, with an air of ſome haughtineſs, gravely ſaid, "Your error, Frederic, being that of ignorance, is very pardonable; but a little reflection will convince you of the impropriety of perſons of our rank in life viſiting people ſo inferior as Mrs Nevil."

Cecilia, who the whole time ſhe had been ſpeaking, had kept a fixed ſmile upon her countenance, now turned towards him, and, looking in his face,

"Are you really in earneſt, Frederic?" ſaid ſhe; "and did you really ſuppoſe that you had gained a great acquiſition?—what, I ſuppoſe you thought that the poor, good, diſagreeable woman was to come here to a Sunday dinner, with her beſt courteſy, and ſtiff apron clean out of the drawer, and her wedding gown, frightened out of her ſenſes, poor ſoul! at the thoughts of viſiting Madam and Miſs at the great 'Squire's; and then we were to return the viſit, and be ſhewn *Miſs* Nevil's dairy, and her ſamp'er, and a variety of other little elegancies which ſhe no doubt poſſeſſes; and to crown the day, we were to be treated with a ſillabub under the cow. My dear Frederic, permit me, both for my mother and myſelf, to return you ſincere thanks for the obligation you intended to confer upon us."

"Pray Cecilia," ſaid Frederic, did you intend to diſtinguiſh that ſpeech, by truth, wit,

wit, or good-nature? I am at a loſs to determine."

"That is very probable, ſince it certainly abounded in all three."

"The laſt particularly, I think."

"The laſt! which was that? wit?"

"No, good-nature."

"Oh certainly it was intended to pleaſe; but, by your countenance, I ſhould judge that it had failed of that effect."

"I own it has excited but one ſenſation in me, ſurpriſe."

"Surpriſe! how do you mean?"

"To hear from your mouth, a ſpeech ſo nearly allied to folly in its ſtyle, and to meanneſs in its ſentiment."

"That will never do Frederic; you muſt not talk to Miſs Nevil in that highflown language, ſhe will never underſtand you; not but the ſpeech is very fine; now ſay it over once; more do now, to oblige me."

"It is very improbable that I ſhould ever have occaſion to accommodate ſuch a ſpeech to Miſs Nevil's comprehenſion."

"Oh, I have no doubt that Miſs Nevil's *ſtyle*

and

and *ſentiment* are very excellent; only a little vulgar or ſo; not of the moſt elevated claſs."

"Not ſufficiently ſo, perhaps, to conceive poverty in itſelf ridiculous, or to employ low raillery and mean deſcription to repreſent it as ſuch," retorted Frederic, with ſome bitterneſs."

"I am ſorry, Frederic, ſaid Mrs. Montague, "that your new acquaintance ſhould alienate your affection from your couſin."

"You injure me, madam, by ſuppoſing it poſſible; but I own ſhe has greatly ſurprized me."

"At leaſt, however," ſaid Cecilia, "we are equal; for if my low *raillery* and *mean deſcription*, have ſurpriſed you, your blank verſe and lofty manner have no leſs confounded me: but you ſhould excuſe me, indeed you ſhould, if my ſpeeches are inferior to your own, as I never take the trouble to compoſe them before I utter them."

"Nor to arrange your ideas before you expreſs them," again retorted Frederic.

"My dear children," cried Mrs. Montague, "what are you doing? for ſhame!

for

for ſhame! upon what a ridiculous ſubject are you loſing your tempers; but indeed Frederic you are wrong to propoſe ſuch an acquaintance."

"Oh, abſurd!" cried Montague "I wonder how it could enter your head, that I would viſit one of my tenants; I deſire that I may hear no more of it."

All parties were ſilent; and, as it was now late, Miſs Montague was ſummoned to ſupper, but that lady choſe not to appear.

After ſupper, a long diſpute took place between Mr. and Mrs. Montague upon the propriety of Frederic's amuſing himſelf in his new purſuit of agriculture; this had a powerful advocate in Montague; and as that gentleman, when he could not convince, contented himſelf with affirming, and, where he had power, of inſiſting upon the juſtice of his arguments, Mrs. Montague, as uſual, yielded.

Cecilia and Frederic, for the firſt time in their lives, were parting very coldly; when, their eyes happening to meet, both involuntarily ſmiled: Frederic took her hand and preſſed

preſſed it warmly; Cecilia vouchſafed him a kiſs, and then in her uſual ſtyle crying, "Good night, Frederic," tripped lightly away; "God bleſs you, my dear Cecilia," ſaid he, in a voice of great kindneſs, and retired to his apartment, exceſſively delighted with this unhoped-for reconciliation.

CHAP. XI.

FREDERIC had too much matter for reflection to admit immediately of repoſe; this day had opened to him at the ſame time, new ſcenes of happineſs, and new ones of uneaſineſs: naturally ſanguine, his imagination repreſented in lively colours, the amiable qualities which he thought he had diſcovered in Mrs. and Miſs Nevil; and his good ſenſe forgot to remind him, how ſhort had been the opportunity, how inadequate the ſpace of time, to allow him to have formed a juſt eſtimate of them.

"And

"And ſurely," thought he, "the diſpleaſure of Mrs. Montague, and the ſeverity of Cecilia were unjuſtifiable; had I profeſſed love for Miſs Nevil, I could not have met with a ſharper rebuke; but as I merely admired her converſation, I might have met with more lenity."

The more he conſidered, the more he was diſguſted with the behaviour of his relations, and in proportion as they ſunk in his eſteem, his new acquaintance roſe; he was about to draw a compariſon between Mrs. Nevil and Mrs. Montague; but gratitude, affection, and good ſenſe, at once combated the idea, and Frederic diſmiſſed it with indignation.

When he took leave of Mrs. Nevil, he had reſolved to repeat his viſit early in the morning, and he now debated whether he ſhould put that intention in execution? ſomething like honor ſeemed to forbid it; he could not do it openly, without encountering the anger of Mr. and Mrs. Montague, and the ridicule of Cecilia; and to do it privately, he thought mean and diſgraceful; it would degrade him in his own opinion; he

ſhould feel conſcious of deſerving all he reſented: but he had been treated ungeneroufly by his relations; he owed nothing to their delicacy, ſince they had paid ſo little regard to his: the ridicule of Cecilia had conſiderably abated his eſteem for her, and her influence over him in proportion: to brave their reſentment, he would not heſitate, ſince he was no longer checked by a regard to their feelings. Mrs. and Miſs Nevil had behaved in a manner which merited his eſteem and gratitude; and it was unjuſt, diſhonourable, and abſurd to ſacrifice them to the caprice and falſe prejudices of perſons who had not ſcrupled to inflict unneceſſary pain on him.

Such were the arguments which his heart ſuggeſted to overpower his principles in ſupport of a reſolution, from the execution of which he promiſed himſelf ſo much happineſs; and he determined, if his family continued obſtinate, himſelf ſingly to continue the acquaintance.

In vain did reaſon endeavour to combat the determination; in vain did it paint in ſtrong

ſtrong colours the ingratitude of ſo openly oppoſing the wiſhes of thoſe to whom he owed ſo much, the ſelfiſhneſs of preferring his own gratification to their peace, and the folly of attempting to oppoſe the will of thoſe on whom, even for ſubſiſtence, he was wholly dependant.

To the perſuaſions of reaſon he might not perhaps have been deaf, if pique, or the ſimple deſire of enlarging his acquaintance, had alone been oppoſed to them; but another motive, latent indeed, but powerful, had inſinuated itſelf into his heart,—a motive againſt whoſe ſuggeſtions reaſon was but a weak antagoniſt; it was of courſe ſilenced, although it could not be refuted, and Frederic continued firm to his purpoſe.

This difficulty once over, peace and ſatisfaction returned to his boſom; the recollection of the pleaſure he had derived from his morning's occupation recurred to him; he wiſhed to renew it, and, as Montague evidently encouraged and his lady no longer oppoſed it, he determined in this alſo to follow his inclination.

"And

"And probably," ſaid he, "when my employment is known, they will not judge it neceſſary to enquire ſo ſtrictly into the cauſe of my abſence."

Frederic was not himſelf conſcious of all this thought implied, or that he intended his employment as a pretence for his abſence on other occaſions, or he would not perhaps have ſuffered him to meditate upon putting into practice ſuch mean diſſimulation.

Early in the morning he aroſe; and, having ſent a ſervant to enquire after the health of Mr. Haywood, he was immediately going to ſet out towards L——, but happening to enter the breakfaſt room, he found Cecilia there; ſhe was reading, but raiſing her eyes as he entered,

"Oh, Frederic!" cried ſhe, "you are as early as myſelf; where are you going?"

"Going!" repeated Frederic," why—I was going—that is, I believe I was going to take a walk."

"You believe! how odd you anſwer; what is the matter with you?"

"Nothing—only I thought——"

"Well, well, you are going to walk, you ſay; well, let me ſee, it is a pleaſant morning I believe, ſo if you can wait till I get my hat and gloves I'll go with you."

Before he could anſwer, ſhe was gone, and in a minute afterwards he heard her calling him, adding that ſhe was ready; Frederic bit his lips, but obeyed, and followed her into the garden.

Cecilia was not long ſilent, "I am very low-ſpirited, Frederic."

"Low-ſpirited!"

"Yes, certainly; only recollect how angry my aunt is; Jenny tells me ſhe had her ſupper in her own room laſt night, and intends to have her breakfaſt there this morning; and I had determined to take it up myſelf, and have lain awake all night, and have been reading all this morning in order to compoſe a ſpeech for her; for nobody has any idea what excellent friends we are when we are alone; but now you have made me undo all."

"I!"

'Yes, you; only recollect how you have made

made me disturb her; she will be quite implacable, and I shall be quite melancholy."

In his present state of impatience, this trifling was intolerable; Frederic could scarce conceal his chagrin; it was in vain that he endeavoured to prevail upon her to return. Far from having any such intention, she declared that she wished to prolong the walk until the breakfast hour, and in the mean time she would visit his favourite field. Frederic, suffering all the tortures of disappointment and impatience, slowly led the way; he sighed deeply when in the the prospect, dusky with the vapours of the morning, he discerned the distant spire of L——; a long while he contemplated it, equally regardless of the presence and conversation of Cecilia; when that young lady took out her watch, and declared that it was high time to return to breakfast.

Frederic, who had too much good sense to suffer his vexation to degenerate into ill-humour, let her continue her conversation, until she was quite out of breath, with ridi-

culing her aunt, and occaſionally hinting at her father, when he ventured to expoſtulate.

"Cecilia, my dear Cecilia, ſaid he, "why will you talk away at this rate?"

"How do you mean?"

"You have already talked an hour without expreſſing one idea which your good ſenſe would not make you bluſh to hear repeated."

"And pray what effect ought politeneſs to have on your own cheeks, if that ſpeech of your's were repeated?"

"I did not conſult politeneſs, but my regard for you, when I made it."

"That you did not conſult politeneſs I can readily allow, but I cannot feel much gratitude for ſuch a teſtimony of your regard; I am ſure it is very cruel to ſtop me when I intend to be very pleaſing, or at leaſt to pleaſe myſelf."

"I have no doubt you intended both, and had you taken leſs trouble, you would not have failed in either."

Cecilia looked at him earneſtly, then toſſing her head, and raiſing her eyes, ſhe declared,

declared, that he was wholly inſufferable, and left him.

It occurred to Frederic that he might now make his viſit; but, upon conſulting the time, he found that it was already paſt eight o'clock, and of courſe to go to L——, and return before breakfaſt would be impoſſible; ſlowly and diſconſolately he continued his way to the hall.

As ſoon as breakfaſt was over, a ſervant delivered the following note into his hands:

SIR, *June* 30, 1792.

"We return you ſincere thanks, both for your care of my poor father laſt night, and your obliging enquiry this morning; he is better than we could expect and we have great hopes of his recovery.

I am, ſir,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

FRANCIS HAYWOOD."

P. S. I am ſorry to hear that Miſs Nevil is very unwell in conſequence of her fright and fatigue."

Frederic changed colour as he read the concluſion of this note; riſing inſtantly, he was about to go immediately to L——, when Cecilia detained him for ſome time with a variety of frivolous queſtions, until Montague deſired him to accompany himſelf in a walk to his farm; Frederic dared not refuſe, although to comply was almoſt intolerable; to walk, thus accompanied, was even worſe than being confined at home; but he had no alternative.

Frederic paſſed a miſerable morning; diſappointed, vexed, and chagrined, he was, on his return, (as Cecilia obſerved) more than commonly diſagreeable, and ſhe rallied him without mercy. As ſoon as dinner was over, he aroſe haſtily, without ſpeaking to any one, and leaving the houſe directed his ſteps to L——, reſolved that nothing ſhould detain him; he ran ſwiftly, dreading to look behind him, leſt ſome new obſtacle ſhould intervene; but he had nothing to fear; and in a ſhort time he ſaw himſelf in the mead which fronted the little hill on which ſtood the houſe of Mrs. Nevil.

Frederic

Frederic had the ſatisfaction to find Miſs Nevil perfectly recovered; and the apparent pleaſure with which he was received by Mrs. Nevil, amply repaid him for all the mortification which he had experienced in the morning.

The elegance of Mrs. Nevil and her daughter, their manner of expreſſion, ſo ſuperior (in his conception) to what he had been accuſtomed to, their ſentiments and ideas ſo conformable to his own, could not fail of impreſſing yet deeper the favourable opinion which Frederic had formed of them; and time, while thus delightfully ſpent, glided imperceptibly away. The ſinking ſun, however, admoniſhed him of his imprudence; and, dreading a ſcene of ill-nature, to which, however accuſtomed, he was by no means reconciled, he aroſe to depart.

"You will, I hope, honour us with your company at tea, Mr. Montague," ſaid Mrs. Nevil.

"I ſhould be very happy, but I am afraid I dare not accept your kind invitation, as my uncle will expect me at the hall."

"I will not then detain you; but I need not ſay how welcome your preſence will always be at L——."

"You are very obliging; and I will not be ſo much an enemy to myſelf, as not to take advantage of your kindneſs."

He then took leave, and haſtened homeward, anticiptiang in his mind all the way, the enquiries, ſarcaſms, and reproaches which he muſt undergo; and vainly and idly lamenting the cruelty of his ſituation, which ſubjected him to mortification ſo undeſerved, and indignity ſo intolerable. He had formerly been diſcontented, when he had merely regretted the want of ſociety, of whoſe ſweets he had only formed an idea; but he had now taſted them, they were within his reach, yet was he debarred from their enjoyment, or reduced to the miſerable alternative of enduring perpetual ill humour, and even of incurring the danger of being totally renounced by his family; but fear was a paſſion to which the heart of Frederic, on common occaſions, would not eaſily yield; how then was he likely to liſten to its ſuggeſtions when

when oppoſed to ſo powerful an antagoniſt as love?"

The innocent open manner, the ingenuous expreſſion of her eyes, added to the beauties of Emma, and made them doubly captivating; Frederic was juſt of an age to feel their full effect, an age when every thing delightful is ſeen through a magnifying perſpective; and when the ſuggeſtions of love are liſtened to with eagerneſs, becauſe his influence is new, and his power is violent in proportion to its recency.

Frederic did not, however, wholly neglect conſulting his reaſon on this occaſion, ſince he could no longer conceal from it the impreſſion he had received: its objections however were few, or at leaſt they were conſidered weak; gentleneſs, good ſenſe, elegance, beauty, all were on the ſide of inclination, and ſtrongly pleaded in favour of its ſuggeſtions. The poverty of Miſs Nevil was of little importance, ſince, although Montague choſe to keep him at preſent in total dependance, yet, as he called, and ſeemed to conſider him as his ſon, there was

no

no doubt but his future proviſion would be handſome, if not ſplendid. But it was almoſt certain, that Montague never would conſent to his union with one ſo much his inferior; yet ſurely he could not even then ſuffer the child of his ſiſter to be wholly deſtitute, and let the pittance which mght be expected be ever ſo ſcanty, with Emma Nevil it would be riches.

Theſe affairs being adjuſted, Frederic next began to ſummon patience and fortitude to his aid, to encounter the anger, which he was now conſcious of having, in ſome meaſure deſerved: his apprehenſions were, however, groundleſs; a reconciliation had taken place between Montague and his ſiſter, and they were perfectly friendly, and in high good humour when he entered. Mrs. Montague received him cheerfully, and Cecilia, too much occupied by a ſubject which ſhe was diſcuſſing with great vehemence, made no enquiries. But Frederic was only relieved from one uneaſineſs to be plunged into another yet ſeverer; that conſciouſneſs which accompanies actions when concealment is

their

their only fault, tormented him; concealment was new to Frederic, and to a mind like his, doubly grievous; reproach he could have ſubmitted to, (now it was merited) with patience; but good humour was intolerable, becauſe he felt that he did not deſerve it: but his abſence had been unnoticed; and, as it was by no means late, no enquiries had been made concerning him.

Diſquieted, vexed, and aſhamed, yet firm to his purpoſe, Frederic retired as early as poſſible to ruminate at leiſure on the events of the day: vexed with himſelf, yet not repenting his conduct; blaming his future deſigns, yet reſolving to put them in execution, he paſſed a ſleepleſs night, waiting anxiouſly for the morning, when he determined to repair immediately to L——, and to forget, in the ſweet ſociety of Emma, all his diſquietude.

For ſome time the viſits of Frederic at L——, were very frequent; two days never paſſed without his going thither, and his motives began to be very freely diſcuſſed, every where but at Montague-hall; there as yet every thing remained unknown.

CHAP. VII.

EARLY one morning towards the end of July, Frederic was purſuing the well known path, when, to his great ſurpriſe, he perceived Miſs Nevil; ſhe was alone, ſitting on the ſtile which bounded the little mead; ſhe held a book in her hand, to which ſhe ſeemed to pay little attention, but the tears fell frequently upon it. Exceſſively hurt, Frederic ran towards her.

"Good heavens! Miſs Nevil," cried he, "what can be the matter?"

Emma ſtarted at his voice, then turned away her head, but ſtill was ſilent.

"Will you not tell me then?" continued he, with increaſing anxiety; "Oh, Miſs Nevil! I entreat you do not conceal from me, why I ſee you thus."

"Alas! how can I be otherwiſe?" ſaid Emma in a melancholy tone, "when I am going

going to be ſacrificed!" the laſt word died upon her lips, and ſhe burſt into a freſh flood of tears.

"Sacrificed!" repeated Frederic, with horror; "Good God! what can you mean? Emma—Miſs Nevil, explain yourſelf, I entreat you."

"Oh, Mr. Montague! why will you aſk? it little imports you to know," cried ſhe ſighing.

"Can any thing which concerns you be unimportant to me? do not then keep me in the ſuſpenſe: the miſery that terrible word has occaſioned!"

"Oh, ſir, I cannot, I muſt not, I ought not to explain it to you; what imprudence have I been guilty of in uttering it!—oh, why did you come to obſerve me now?"

"What then, Miſs Nevil, do you doubt the ſincerity of my friendſhip? or do you think I do not ſympathiſe in every affliction of your's?"

"Oh, no, ſir, I do not doubt your ſincerity; but—"

"But what?—oh, Miſs Nevil! if you could

could ſee the miſery which that word had occaſioned in my heart, you would not delay relieving it,"

"Miſery! to you Mr. Montague?"

"Oh! why will you repeat my words?" cried Frederic, impatiently, "and not liſten to their import. Heavens! what am I to ſuppoſe?"

Emma was a moment ſilent; then compoſing herſelf, and ſpeaking more calmly,

"I have already," ſaid ſhe, "committed imprudence; it is too late to retreat, and I ought not to leave you to conjecture. My uncle, Mr. Nevil, came laſt night, and he has inſiſted upon my immediately marrying the ſon of Mr. Haywood."

"And you will conſent!" cried Frederic, trembling with diſmay, "you will ſubmit to ſuch violence!"

"Alas! what can I do? my chief dependance is on Mr. Nevil, and my mother has ſaid my conſent will make her happy: I love my mother, Mr. Montague, and I ought, I wiſh to make her happy."

"But will you give yourſelf to a boor, a clown?" "No

"No," interrupted ſhe, "there you wrong him; Mr. Haywood is neither aukward nor churliſh; his temper is amiable, his perſon far from diſagreeable, and his accompliſhments by no means contemptible for our rank of life."

"Oh, you love him!" cried Frederic, in an agony; "yes, yes, you follow your inclination, and I am undone!—but he will never love you as I do.—Oh! if I have not his perſon, his accompliſhments, yet——but excuſe me, Miſs Nevil, forgive me, I know not what I ſay; I have no right to cenſure or controul you."

"Mr. Montague," cried Emma, with a look of aſtoniſhment, "what can you mean?"

"Oh, Miſs Nevil!" cried Frederic, taking her hand, "how will you ever pardon my impertinence? my unguardedneſs has expoſed what I ought for ever to have concealed; but it is too late; ſuffer me then to repeat that I love you as I ſhall never love another; but I leave you, Emma, dear Emma!—farewel!—heaven bleſs you—make you happy—though I never can be ſo!"

He

He was going, but Emma involuntarily recalled him.

"Mr. Montague," ſaid ſhe, "you deceive yourſelf, I do not love Mr. Haywood; on the contrary he is diſagreeable to me, and duty, not inclination, makes me accept him."

"Oh, then," cried Frederic, eagerly, "perhaps—perhaps I may hope!"

"Yourſelf may judge," anſwered Miſs Nevil, in a confuſed voice, whether the preſent converſation is proper; in my opinion it is far otherwiſe;—pardon me, then, if I wiſh to break it off."

Then ſlightly wiſhing him good morning, ſhe ſuddenly left him; Frederic looked after her till ſhe was out of ſight, but feared to follow her.

Confounded at the abruptneſs of her ſpeech and departure, vexed and irritated at his own abſurd conduct, by which he doubted not that he had raiſed contempt where he moſt wiſhed to excite eſteem; and, grieved at the almoſt indignant coolneſs of her manner, which, while it raiſed her in his eſteem, depreſſed his hopes of obtaining her favour,

favour, Frederic ſlowly and reluctantly bent his ſteps homeward; ſad and deſpondent, he ſighed to reflect on his own deficiency in thoſe amiable qualities which might gain him the heart of her he loved; an acquiſition, which, the farther it was out of his reach, the more neceſſary did it ſeem to his happineſs; he lamented that he poſſeſſed not the perſon of Haywood, unconſcious of his own ſuperiority, ſo far had flattery or even praiſe been from him, that he was wholly ignorant of the advantages with which Nature had endowed him; and had it been otherwiſe, to him they would have appeared of little value if they rendered him not amiable in the eyes of Emma.

The farther he proceeded, the weaker, the more irreſolute grew his ſteps; he re-conſidered the ſpeech of Miſs Nevil: to put it in its moſt unfavourable light, there was nothing in it which expreſſed either contempt or averſion, nothing which could prevent his viſits at L——: this thought comforted him, for it renewed his hopes; the romantic idea entered his imagination, that even if

duty

duty ſhould compel her to give herſelf to another, yet, could he hope that himſelf lived in her heart, he ſhould be happy; and he reſolved rather to ſecond than combat Emma's determination to comply with the wiſhes of her mother and her uncle. While he applauded himſelf for the generoſity and fortitude of this reſolution, its ſecret ſupport was a latent hope that ſuch diſintereſted conduct might procure him the eſteem of Emma, and, in the end, break through that regard to duty which he ſhould ſeem to ſupport; this motive, however, he did not acknowledge to himſelf, as it would have wholly annihilated that ſelf-applauſe which ſoothed him.

Frederic's next ſtep, after long meditating upon this intereſting ſubject, was immediately to return to L——; for as he now intended to be merely on the footing of a friend, Miſs Nevil's implied rejection of him ſhould by no means put a period to his acquaintance or friendſhip either with her mother or herſelf.

When he entered, he was introduced to Mrs.

Mrs. Nevil alone, with whoſe gravity of countenance he was much ſtruck. She aroſe at his entrance, and then gravely deſiring him to be ſeated,—" Mr. Montague," ſaid ſhe, " you are come very opportunely, as I much wiſhed to have ſome converſation with you."

Frederic bowed.

" It is unneceſſary to ſay," continued ſhe, " how much pleaſure we have received from your viſits; judge then of my ſorrow in being obliged to requeſt their diſcontinuance; your judgment will doubtleſs confirm the propriety of the requeſt."

" Good heaven! madam," cried the amazed Frederic, " what can this mean?—has any thing—"

" No, ſir, I mean not to complain; but a mother cannot be too careful of a daughter's reputation; think not, ſir, that I mean any implication againſt your honour; your youth, your innocence, your character, all prevent my harbouring ſuſpicion; but many will judge far otherwiſe of your condeſcenſion; this idea has for ſome time convinced me of the

the imprudence of allowing your viſits; later events have proved the impropriety."

Frederic coloured deeply at this inſinuation; "I am grieved," ſaid he, in a voice of perturbation, "that you have had occaſion to doubt my reſpect; but as the offence was ſudden, was almoſt involuntary, I had hoped it might be forgiven; I came even now to ſolicit pardon from you, although I deſpaired of obtaining it from myſelf."

"I repeat it to you, Mr. Montague, I did not mean to complain; if there has been any fault, I have been the aggreſſor; your ſituation in life, ſo ſuperior to mine, ſhould have prevented my admitting an acquaintance with yourſelf, without the knowledge or conſent of your family; and if it were diſcovered, how humiliating, how inſupportable muſt be the conſtruction which they would put upon my encouraging it. The pleaſure however, which I received from your company, had blinded my judgment; but it has been awakened, and I muſt, however reluctantly, liſten to its dictates."

"And will you, madam," cried Frederic, in

in a dejected tone, "will you be ſo cruel, as to forbid my continuing my viſits? to cut me off from the only pleaſure I enjoy, or can hope for!"

"Conſult your reaſon, ſir; to what purpoſe ſhould I permit your viſits, but to bring diſgrace upon myſelf, and miſery to you, and my child?"

"Miſery to Miſs Nevil!" repeated Frederic, "oh, no! I would ſooner give up every bleſſing on earth. Ah! (continued he, forgetting all his new reſolves), I perceive you have been informed of my impertinence; but if you could know the love that dictated it, you would excuſe me; but you reject me! you drive me from you! and you will give my Emma, my lovely Emma, to another!"

"Full well," cried Mrs. Nevil with more pride, "full well I know the difference of our ſituations: what then is to be inferred from your declarations of love? can you blame me, ſir, if I feel them as inſults?"

"And are the idle diſtinctions of rank the only barriers?" cried Frederic;—"oh! let Emma be mine, and I will forſake every connection

connection for her. Ah! what have I to be proud of? a poor dependent orphan, uncertain of my future deſtiny!"

"As you think proper, Mr. Montague, to make this affair more ſerious, I will enlarge more in explaining my motives. Suppoſing (which I cannot doubt) that your intentions are honourable, is your's a proper age to make propoſals of marriage? You ſay you love my daughter; but ſuppoſing it encouraged, conſider your youth; a few years hence your inclination it is moſt probable will alter; you will ſee many more amiable ladies of your own rank, and then you will forget your early attachment, or think of it only with ſhame and regret; and my poor Emma, her affections enſnared, her happineſs, her reputation, ruined, will be forſaken, deſerted, left to hopeleſs miſery! I know you will profeſs eternal conſtancy; but, allowing that ſuch an improbability could take place, would Mr. Montague allow of ſuch an inferior union? would he ſtoop to call his tenant's daughter niece? You ſay you are dependent, and when your imprudence had forfeited

feited the favour of your uncle, would you wiſh to ally the woman you love to indigence? and, alas! I have little to beſtow; what then would become of you? you would feel the double pang of having diſgraced and offended friends whom you ought to revere, and of ſeeing the woman you adore reduced, by your means, to want and miſery. Recollect yourſelf then, Mr. Montague, yield not to this dangerous weakneſs; it is in its infancy, and it can now be cruſhed; but be aſſured that nothing but this conduct can heighten our eſteem. It hurts me extremely, continued ſhe, affected by the expreſſion of miſery which ſhe obſerved in the countenance of Frederic, to make you unhappy; but be aſſured that I wound my own feelings no leſs than your's; but conſult your good ſenſe, and you will find my juſtification and your own peace."

"Ah, madam!" cried Frederic in a dejected tone, "you are juſtified indeed, but I can never hope for peace; I have never been happy, and you have now ruined every hope; but, if I muſt obey, grant me, at leaſt,

leaſt one favour, it is the laſt I ſhall ever aſk."

"If it be what I can grant," anſwered Mrs. Nevil, "doubt not of my ready acquieſcence."

"You can grant it; you muſt ſuffer me to ſee Miſs Nevil, to let her know what I ſuffer, that at leaſt ſhe may pity me."

"To what purpoſe? but to aggravate your uneaſineſs, and to plant unhappineſs in her breaſt? for what can be more painful to a feeling heart than pity, without ability to give relief? if you really love her, Mr. Montague, can you be ſo ſelfiſh, as to wiſh to make her unhappy, merely to gratify the petulance of diſappointed paſſion?"

"No!" cried Frederic, putting his hand to his forehead, "No! I will not deſire it; it would have given me comfort; but you diſapprove of it; I will not urge it then—oh, no! I will not be the means of making her unhappy. Heaven bleſs you, madam!" continued he, riſing, "Farewel, then, ſince you deſire it, for ever!"

"Not for ever, Mr. Montague!" cried

Mrs. Nevil, the tears ſtarting to her eyes on taking his hand—" one day I hope to renew the acquaintance, when circumſtances ſhall have rendered it no longer improper."

What the expreſſion implied, was more than Frederic could ſupport; recoiling with indignation and anguiſh—

" What!" cried he, " when my love is gone! is given to another! you would no longer then forbid me acceſs to her! you would enjoy my envy! you would feaſt upon my miſery!—and you call ſuch cruelty prudence!"

" Mr. Montague," ſaid Mrs. Nevil, with much dignity, " I am ſorry to obſerve to you, that ſuch behaviour, is far different from what I expected from you."

" What! when you have driven me to miſery, and inſulted my deſpair, you expect decency or reſpect!" cried Frederic, with increaſing emotion; " I have done with both; and you, when you have given your angel to a brute, may have reaſon to deteſt and curſe your intereſted folly; but think

not that I will witneſs the ſacrifice!—Farewel, madam! I repeat it again,—for ever!"

Then waving his hand indignantly, he abruptly left the houſe.

But he had not gone far before, his temper cooling, he repented of every thing he had ſaid; the behaviour of Mrs. Nevil juſtified no ſuch extravagance, her reaſons were juſt and ſolid, they had raiſed her in his eſteem; and could he blame, had he any reaſon to complain of, or right to controul her conduct? to her daughter ſhe behaved, at the ſame time, with the prudence and affection of a mother—to him, with the kindneſs of a friend.

Remorſe now poured in upon him from every quarter; how had he eſtimated this prudence? how had he requited this kindneſs?—with folly, and violence! he had now overthown the only ſupport of his hopes, the eſteem of Mrs. Nevil; he had once poſſeſſed it, but it was now loſt for ever!

Agonized by ſuch thoughts, he hurried on to reach the hall, to forget in the ſociety of his friends, his unhappineſs, and to reap

conſolation from their kindneſs and affection, which, however little he was conſcious of deſerving, he yet hoped to experience.

Nor was he diſappointed; the new gueſts, cheerfulneſs and good-humour, ſtill reſided with his family, and every thing appeared far different from the ſtate of his own mind. Montague, in particular, treated him with kindneſs; and Cecilia rallied him indeed, but with goodnature, which delighted, yet hurt him.

As ſoon as dinner was over, Montague deſired him to attend him in the library.

"My dear Frederic," ſaid he, as ſoon as they were alone, "you know I have always loved you as my ſon."

Frederic, extremely affected by this kindneſs, felt a tear fill his eye; "you have always, ſir," ſaid he, "been too good to me."

"No," returned Montague, "your conduct hitherto, I muſt ſay, has deſerved my affection; lately, in particular, I have been pleaſed with it: and I have now ſomething of great importance to communicate to you, as I think you now of a proper age to hear it.

As I ſaid, I have always conſidered you as my ſon, and have always choſen that you ſhould be called by my name, which I intend you to take; on this account, the world ſuppoſes you are to be my heir, nor will it be miſtaken: but there is another circumſtance of which every one but myſelf is ignorant;—my poor father, on his death-bed, while he held my hand in his, ſaid he, "My dear Henry, you know I had always intended to provide equally for both your ſiſters: my poor Emmeline has forſaken me; but if ſhe return, do not deſert her, but provide for her handſomely, as becomes your ſiſter. Do not, however, give the twenty thouſand pounds, I intended for her, to her huſband; but if ſhe have children, ſave it for them, for they are innocent, and they are my children, and you muſt look upon them as belonging to my family; but I leave it in your power, as I would have you conſult your diſcretion in its diſpoſal; thoſe children may not deſerve your favour, and I would not render them independent of you." Soon after this ſpeech, my father died; your poor mother

mother was not regarded in the will, otherwiſe than by a repetition of this requeſt, which to me is ſacred. In two years you will be of age: and when that period arrives, the ſum, which has been accumulating ever ſince your infancy, will be a handſome eſtabliſhment for you."

"Oh, ſir," cried Frederic, ſtruck to the heart by the conſciouſneſs of his own miſconduct, "I do not, indeed I do not, deſerve this favour."

"I am the beſt judge," cried Montague, "of your conduct; I am entirely ſatisfied with it; I doubt not but I always ſhall be, and you ſhall never feel the want of parents."

Frederic could not expreſs his gratitude; Emma lived too ſtrongly in his heart to allow him to think of changing his intentions with regard to her; and he would not make profeſſions of conduct, which he meant not to fulfil; for, in ſpite of the late circumſtances, hope had not forſaken him; this converſation rather revived it, for by the information which he had gained from it, the material objection of Mrs. Nevil was wholly removed.

"I loved your mother, Frederic," continued Montague; "and I would have ſhewn my gratitude to the young woman, who, I hear from Dr. Evans, was ſo kind to her; but ſhe married ſoon afterwards, and left the country, and I believe lives very well. I have little more to ſay to you, only I am pleaſed with your taſte for agriculture, it will always be an amuſement for you; yet as it grieves Mrs. Montague, do not let your abſence in future be quite ſo frequent." They then returned to the ladies.

Montague had long laboured with this important ſecret; but the wiſh of keeping his nephew in more ſubjection, had hitherto ſilenced him; the late ſubmiſſive behaviour however of Frederic, the conſequence of conſcious impropriety of conduct, together with his ſeeming taſte for his own favourite purſuit, had ſo much raiſed him in the affection of Montague, that he was reſolved at once to aſtoniſh him into delight and gratitude.

Nothing but the extreme diſtance which the family of Montague kept up with the neighbourhood, could have prevented their hearing

hearing of the frequent viſits of Frederic to L——, which were now the general ſubject of converſation. The report, however, by means of the maid, found its way to the ears of Cecilia; but that generous girl loved him too well, to bring ſo much injury and diſgrace upon him, as would be the conſequence of diſcloſing it; ſhe had even the delicacy to avoid mentioning it to himſelf, that he might not be humbled by knowing his obligation to her.

Frederic himſelf was much altered; degraded in his own eſteem, he no longer expected that of others: perpetually in dread of diſcovery, he dared not appear melancholy or inattentive, leaſt the true cauſe ſhould be ſuſpected: gaiety, therefore, he was compelled to aſſume, to ſubmit to every rebuff with patience, and to be more than uſually attentive while at home, that his frequent abſence might not too minutely be inveſtigated. No longer thinking himſelf at liberty to reſent any thing, he endured all the ill-humour of Miſs Montague, which

to him was unabated; he even ſtudied to pleaſe her, and he almoſt ſucceeded.

Far from ſuſpecting the real motive, Mrs. Montague was delighted with the change; Frederic was now every thing ſhe wiſhed; ſhe ſaw him cheerful and contented, and ſhe cared not to enquire into the cauſe which made him ſo, Cecilia alone; acquainted with the true cauſe, ſaw through, and pitied him; yet could ſhe not altogether prevent ſome contempt from mixing with it.

Frederic, naturally penetrating, doubly ſo now ſharpened by terror and ſuſpicion, could not avoid obſerving this effect on his couſin; he ſaw it, and was miſerable; his laſt reſource, an intention to communicate his diſtreſſes to her, and to obtain advice and conſolation, was cut off; for, conſcious as he was of deſerving blame, he could not brook contempt: much did he condemn his former groundleſs uneaſineſs, light and contemptible as it ſeemed, compared to his preſent unhappineſs, yet did he not fail to paint to himſelf his ſituation far more melancholy than it really was, not conſidering, that the time

time might arrive when the idea of the preſent would be wholly obliterated by the yet untaſted and ſeverer ſufferings of life.

The only thought which brought comfort with it to Frederic, was an intention to make an apology to Mrs. Nevil for his late behaviour, and to aſſure her of his conſtant eſteem and friendſhip, even if he muſt relinquiſh his deareſt hopes; but, more particularly, he propoſed to mention the information which he had received from his uncle, upon which his hopes had immediately brightened, and he reſolved to go that afternoon to L——.

CHAP. VI.

ALWAYS prompt in the execution of a plan, Frederic flew immediately to L——; but he no longer dared enter with his uſual familiarity. He ſent in his name; Mrs. Nevil, was not at home; Miſs Nevil?—ſhe was likewiſe gone out.

"Ah, Nancy," ſaid Frederic to the girl who brought the meſſage, who was his foſter-ſiſter, "you bluſh; tell me the truth, are they really from home?"

"Lauk no, ſir," returned the girl, "Madam and Miſs are both in the parlour, and ſo is Mr. Nevil; only they bid me ſay ſo."

"Well, another time you muſt not tell falſehoods to pleaſe them; but could you contrive to perſuade Miſs Nevil to ſee me for a moment?"

"To be ſure, Mr. Frederic I'll try; but they are all ſadly wrong, and Miſs has been crying."

"Crying!—Heavens! what can be the cauſe?"

"Oh, as to that, there's cauſe enough to be ſure; there's young Mr. Haywood been here; now you muſt know, ſir, that's a perſon as Miſs Emma doesn't greatly like; that is to ſay, he's a likely man to be ſure, and all that, but however Miſs Emma don't chuſe him for a huſband; for, ſays ſhe to me—"

Well, well, that may be; but *his* being here, alone, cannot have diſtreſſed her ſo much, there muſt——" "Yes

"Yes, yes, ſir, I was coming to that; well, ſir, as I was ſaying——but, ſir, you may as well walk in and ſit down too; for—"

"Pſha!" cried Frederic, "why will you torment me ſo? do pray go on."

"Yes, ſir;—well, ſir, then, as I ſaid, Mr. Haywood has been here to day, and been with Miſs; and ſo, after he was gone, and he went away quite melancholy like, my miſtreſs and Mr. Nevil, ſent for Miſs to them, and they were all ſhut up together, and I over heard terrible high words; this was juſt as you come; and ſo, when I went in, there was poor Miſs Emma crying and taking on ſadly: and ſo I ſaid, ſays I, "here's young 'Squire Montague."—"Tell him, we're not at home," ſays ſhe,—"Not at home, ma'am!" ſays I, wondering enough what ſhe meant: ſo, ſays Mr. Nevil, "What does the fool ſtop for? do pray, girl, take your meſſage:" and he gave me one of his terrible looks, and they always frighten me; and, to be ſure, tis odd enough, being, as how, every body knows, that Miſs and you have kept company ſo long; and, if I may

ſpeak the truth, I fancy Miſs likes you the beſt; aye, and a great deal too."

"Ah! no, no, no;" cried Frederic, "I have too much reaſon to think otherwiſe; but I would give the world to ſee her for a few moments."

"Why, to be ſure, ſir," ſaid Nancy, "I don't wonder at your loving Miſs Emma; for there never was a ſweeter, better-tempered perſon than what ſhe is, except, to be ſure, juſt now; but then ſhe is ſo tantalized, and being in love too, I've heard ſay—"

"Oh, Nancy! how can you flatter me ſo?—ah! no, no, ſhe will never love me!"

"Lauk! Mr. Frederic how you talk!—why Mr. Haywood is as good a looking man, and good-natured too, as you would wiſh to ſee; and what could ſhe be ſo ſet againſt him for? without ſhe liked ſome body elſe better, and who ſhould that be but you? nay, for that matter, I know more than I'll ſay."

"What! what do you know?" cried Frederic.

"Oh, nothing at all; I muſt'nt ſay one word more." "Nay,

"Nay, but pray Nancy—"

"No, Mr. Frederic, if I can't keep my own ſecrets, it does'nt become me to tell other people's; but, however, if you want to ſee Miſs, I think I can order it; if—let me ſee —aye, if you will be down in the mead about an hour from now, and then it will be duſkiſh."

Frederic again urged her to explain what ſhe had hinted, but ſhe continued to refuſe him reſolutely; finding it uſeleſs to perſevere, he promiſed to obey her direction, and departed.

The words of his foſter-ſiſter, had given Frederic inexpreſſible delight; if ſhe conjectured aright, Emma, the dear Emma, loved him— loved ſufficiently to combat, for his ſake, principle, duty, and cruelty; and ſhe ſeemed to have authority indiſputable for her conjecture.

"Ah, then, my poor Emma!" ſaid he, "if it be ſo, you ſuffer as ſeverely, yes even more ſo, than I do!"

A tear ſtole down his cheek as he ſpoke; and the ſadneſs of pity was almoſt loſt in the tender

tender warmth of ſympathy. He was indulging theſe thoughts, the moſt delicious he had ever known, when her own behaviour to him, ſo cold, ſo diſtant, recurred to his mind, and daſhed his riſing hopes.

"Ah, then!" ſaid he, "ſhe likes, ſhe eſteems me perhaps; but, ſhe cannot love me;—no—I could not have ſpoken ſo to her!—I have liſtened to no duty—I have given up every thing for her ſake!"

In ſuch reflections, the long hour paſſed away; during which, Frederic lingered about the fields of L——. At length the ſun was gone, the twilight came on, and he haſtened to the appointment and took his ſtand at the ſtile, which was oppoſite the houſe.

Here he waited a long time, in miſerable expectation, watching the door, until his eye ached, and the increaſing darkneſs almoſt hid it from his view. At laſt it was opened by a female; ſhe ran towards him, and in the next moment he heard the voice of Nancy.

"Mr. Frederic! Mr. Frederic!" ſaid ſhe, "come! Miſs Emma is at my heels."

Frederic

Frederic flew to meet her, and preſently a new voice ſtruck his ear, it was that of Miſs Nevil.

"Well," ſaid ſhe, "where is he?" then, perceiving Frederic, "well, young man," ſhe continued, "what do you want with me?"

"My Emma! my love!" cried Frederic, attempting to take her hand.

"Mr. Montague!" exclaimed ſhe, ſtarting, "is it you? is this artifice worthy of you, ſir?"

"Oh! do not go;—Emma! Miſs Nevil! deign to hear me—a moment."

"No, ſir," cried ſhe indignantly, "not an inſtant!"

"Cruel girl!" cried Frederic, detaining her, "you muſt not leave me; I have things of the utmoſt importance to communicate, Oh, liſten! I will not detain you long."

"You will pleaſe to let me paſs, ſir," cried Emma, yet more diſdainfully, "and not reduce me to the neceſſity of calling for aſſiſtance."

"Ah! then it is all as I ſuſpected; you love Haywood—you hate me!"

"By

"By what right, Mr. Montague, do you arraign me thus? am I accountable to you?"

"Oh, no, no, no!" cried Frederic, turning from her, and ſtriking his forehead diſtractedly, "you are not;—I do not detain you—Miſs Nevil, farewell!—I ſhall never ſee you more!—go, go to the happy Haywood!—it will not ſignify, when I am gone;—no, no, no!—you have not cared for me, and you are every thing on earth that is dear to me! But Emma, my ſweet girl! do not hate me when I am no more!"

Softened and terrified by theſe words, Emma was unable, although at liberty, to go.

"Mr. Montague," cried ſhe, trembling, why will you ſhock me thus? what can you mean?"

"Mean!" cried he, "what is it to you? you hate me!"

"No, indeed; indeed I do not hate you; oh! why ſhould you think ſo?

"You avoid—you fly me!"

"Alas! how can I do otherwiſe? if you knew what I ſuffer—what unkind words, what ſevere confinement!"

"Confine-

"Confiement!—Oh, my Emma! are they ſo cruel?—but, if it were otherwiſe, if you were at liberty, you would ſee me ſuffer, and not pity me!"

"Oh, no, ſir! why do you think ſo meanly of me, as to ſuppoſe I ſhould be ſo ungrateful?"

"Ungrateful! oh, Emma! is gratitude all I am to hope for?"

"Oh! Mr. Montague, why will you urge me upon a ſubject which I ought not to enter upon? alas!" continued ſhe, ſighing, "I dare not even think, but as others direct."

"My ſweet Miſs Nevil!" do not think that I will join too to afflict you; I at leaſt will ſhew my love by my forbearance. Farewell, Emma!—love, farewell!"

He was going; but Emma, no longer able to controul herſelf, now called to him to ſtop.

"One word, ſir," cried ſhe; "you have ſhocked me to death by that terrible ſpeech you made juſt now; oh! explain it before you go."

"Explain it! ah, why need I explain it? it

it will not ſignify to you;—no, Emma, I will not perſuade you from your duty, although my death ſhould be the conſequence of your following it."

"Your death!" repeated ſhe.

"Yes!" returned Frederic; "do you think I will outlive your loſs? to ſee you in the arms of Haywood!—no, never, never! But you will not, my dear Emma, ſurely you will not refuſe to ſhed a few tears on my grave!—no one will ever love you half ſo well as I."

Reſentment, pride, and duty had ſucceſſively ſupported Miſs Nevil; but upon this immediate attack upon her feelings, all at once failed; ſhe uttered a deep ſigh, and burſt into tears. Shocked, and repenting his fooliſh warmth, Frederic took her hand.

"Emma! my dear Emma!" ſaid he, "what have I done?—forgive me—forgive my folly!"

She ſtill wept.

"Oh! what can I do to comfort you?" continued he, "do not weep ſo!"

"Why, oh! why will you ſhock me thus?" cried Emma, ſobbing. "I

"I would not ſhock you for the world; oh! ſay what can I do to give you comfort, and I will obey you?"

"Promiſe me that you will not purſue thoſe horrid thoughts: oh! why will you deceive yourſelf, and think ſo wrongly of me?—I do not love Haywood;—I never can!"—and ſhe burſt into a freſh flood of tears.

"You do not love Haywood!" cried Frederic with returning comfort; "oh, Emma! if I could but hope!—in a few years I ſhall be independent; I might then claim you for my own. You do not anſwer;—you ſtill weep;—what am I to think?"

"I entreat you, Montague, do not talk to me thus," ſaid Emma; "if my mother could ſee me—at this hour—in this place! —oh! what would ſhe think?—what would ſhe ſay?"

"Would you have me leave you now, Emma?—would you ſend me away in deſpair?"

"Oh, no! but—"

"I aſk but one thing, condeſcend a leaſt

to

to anſwer, and I ought to, and I will be content;—do you love Haywood better than me?"

Quite off her guard at this unexpected queſtion, and animated, both by tenderneſs and truth, Emma fixed her eyes upon his countenance, then emphatically exclaimed,

"Better than you!—oh, no!"

Emma, confuſed, and half repenting her confeſſion, trembled as he held her hand; ſhe turned from him, and eſſayed to go, but Frederic ſtill detained her.

"Go not dear Miſs Nevil!" ſaid he, "go not, I intreat you, until you have confirmed my happineſs; ſay you will think no more of Haywood; ſay you will conſent, you will allow me to—"

"Mr. Montague," cried ſhe firmly, "I have already ſaid more perhaps, than my own judgment, or even your's, upon reflection, will juſtify; but it is too late to retract; I will not attempt it; but I muſt, in every action of my life, depend wholly on my mother; I never have, and I never will act without her authority and approbation. There

There is one thing, however, which I am at a loſs to account for, the unworthy artifice you employed this evening."

Juſt as Frederic was about to anſwer, the ſhrill voice of Nancy was heard, calling aloud to her young miſtreſs; in an inſtant ſhe joined them.

"Oh, Miſs" cried ſhe, out of breath, Miſtreſs has been looking for you every where, and ſhe's frightened out of her ſenſes: dear me! I could not tell what to ſay to her, for Mr. Nevil was there, and ſo croſs! and queſtioned, and queſtioned,—ſo, ſays I, Miſs is only gone out for a bit, and I believe, that is, I think, ſhe'll not be long; for—for—I almoſt forget what I told them; but they are looking for you now, in the yard."

"Oh, go then, Mr. Montague," cried the affrighted Emma, "or Heaven knows what will become of me!"

"Rather," cried Frederic, "let me ſtay and explain every thing to them, let this evening complete my happineſs."

"Oh, no!" returned ſhe, "go now, for heaven's ſake! do not let them ſee you to-night."

May

"May I then ſee them, and intreat their conſent in the morning? do you permit me?"

"Oh, yes, yes; but pray do not ſtop if you have any regard for me."

Frederic ſubmitted, kiſſed her hand and diſappeared.

CHAP. XIV.

ALL night his wild imagination painted ſcenes of happineſs to the youthful mind of Frederic; his heart bounded at the proſpect, ſleep fled from him, and his thoughts were too delightful to allow him to court it. With the firſt appearance of dawn he aroſe, and immediately hurried to L——; but, alas! its inhabitants, the ſervants excepted) had not yet ariſen, and he was compelled to repreſs his impatience. He recollected now the ſtrange word *artifice*, which Miſs Nevil had repeated more than once on the preceding

ceding evening, and he determined to aſk an explanation of his foſter-ſiſter.

Nancy, whoſe honeſt heart had been inclined, both by its own good-nature and love for Frederic and Emma, to wiſh them happy, had, in conſequence of her promiſe to him, framed a falſehood, or rather an equivocation; and though ſhe bluſhed while ſhe uttered it, her ſimplicity prevented her ſeeing the fault ſhe committed, and its probable conſequences; finding it impoſſible to perſuade Miſs Nevil to ſee Frederic, ſome time after her converſation with him, meeting her out of the parlour,

"Oh, Miſs," ſaid ſhe, "my brother is at the gate, and has a great favour to aſk of you, if you will but be good enough to ſee him."

"Deſire him to come in then," ſaid Emma."

"Oh, no, Miſs, he dares'nt do that, becauſe my miſtreſs is angry with him; and ſo, Miſs, if you would but go to him, he's only juſt out at the gate, I ſhall be much beholden to you."

Always good natured, and unwilling to refuſe

refuſe ſuch a trifle, Miſs Nevil conſented, having no doubt it was Edward Cowſlip. The event has been ſeen; and Nancy, obſerving her young miſtreſs much happier than ſhe had lately been, congratulated herſelf on her own addreſs, and rejoiced in the ſucceſs of her ſcheme; and when Frederic enquired of her, readily confeſſed, or rather triumphed in her ſkill; but when he repreſented the impropriety of the ſcheme, and the ill opinion of himſelf which it had raiſed in the breaſt of Miſs Nevil, ſhe was much hurt, and declared ſhe would confeſs the whole to her, which would not fail of clearing him. "And ſo, ſir, you ſee," continued ſhe, "as it will come to no harm, you muſt ſay it was a good thought."

"Well, well," ſaid Frederic, "I muſt not blame you, ſince it has made me happy; but I muſt deſire that you will never do ſo again."

She faithfully promiſed ſhe would not. Frederic awaited with as much patience as he could the appearance of Mrs. Nevil; meanwhile Nancy did not chooſe to leave him to his own thoughts. "I

"Sad doings, Mr. Frederic," ſaid ſhe, "here's been laſt night; there miſtreſs was ſo angry you can't think, and ſcolded Miſs Emma ſo; that is, ſhe did not ſcold herſelf, but then there's that Mr. Nevil—and he, Mr. Frederic, behaves very ſadly indeed when he's angry, and looks ſo!—there's no bearing to look at him."

"How long has this Mr. Nevil been here? I never ſaw him," cried Frederic.

"Not ſee him! well, to be ſure, I don't wonder at that, for he's only been here theſe two or three days; he's my miſtreſs's brother, or her huſband's brother, or ſome ſuch thing; but let that be as it will, he's no occaſion to be ſo maſterful, and order us up and down, in the manner that he does; but then 'tis all the talk he's very rich, and beſure he has got a great farm, aye two or three for any thing I know, down in the hundreds; and they ſay he could lay down guinea for guinea with any body about, without it be the 'Squire, your uncle, ſir."

"But if he's ſo rich," ſaid Frederic,

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"But if he's ſo rich," ſaid Frederic,

"how is it that his brother left his widow ſo deſtitute?"

"Why, that's more than I know, ſir," returned Nancy, "for Miſs Emma would never talk to me about it, becauſe I fancy ſhe thinks I would not keep it; but you know, ſir, I can keep a ſecret, and ſo, ſir, ſhe might have truſted me; but, dear me! ſhe's ſo kept under, you've no thought; but howſoever, for all they ſcolded her ſo, ſhe did not cry at all, laſt night, but was quite cheerful like, and called me Nanette twenty times, and then I always know ſhe's in good humour, for that's the name ſhe ſet me, when we were little girls and uſed to play together, and that was before I lived here."

"Cheerful!" repeated Frederic, "was ſhe indeed cheerful? Oh, Nancy! how happy you are to be always near her, to ſee her, to ſpeak to her;—but ſhe was cheerful you ſay laſt night, laſt night in particular?"

"Yes, ſir, laſt night to be ſure; and as to my being happy—though I an't *very* happy!"—Nancy ſighed; "to be ſure I do love Miſs Emma next to you, ſir, and my mother

ther, and next to——for, continued ſhe, interrupting herſelf, ſhe is the ſweeteſt beſt tempered perſon!—there's Polly Haywood gives herſelf ſuch airs, and goes ſo fine, without being half ſo pretty, nor half ſo good, nor no more to compare to her than I am to the Queen."

Frederic ſmiled as he liſtened to the ſimple diſcourſe of Nancy; it pleaſed him becauſe it concerned her who was neareſt his heart: and Nancy, who had hardly ever experienced the delight of being liſtened to with ſuch attention, talked without interruption, until ſhe was ſummoned by her miſtreſs's bell; it ſounded, however, twice before ſhe would liſten to it, and then reluctantly ſhe haſtened away.

Frederic meanwhile ſauntered out into the fields to beguile the time: returning to the houſe ſome time afterwards, he learned that the family were aſſembled at breakfaſt."

"But, lord, ſir!" added Nancy, "who do you think is come ſince you have been gone?—now gueſs."

Frederic was ſtartled; "for heaven's ſake tell me, who do you mean?" Nancy

Nancy burſt into a fit of laughter—"Oh, dear!" ſaid ſhe, "to think what a fool's errand he's come upon ſo early; he'd better by half have been a-bed and aſleep; why, ſir, now only think, 'tis young Haywood!"

Frederic changed colour; then paſſing by her, without ſending any meſſage, he abruptly entered the parlour. The firſt figure he ſaw, was a man aparently about fifty, whoſe plump unwieldy perſon was the image of plenty and comfort, while his countenance, though broad and florid, expreſſed nothing but pride and ill nature; his enormous brows overſhadowed his eyes, his great hooked noſe depended far over his mouth, which was drawn down in the form of a creſcent to his chin, while the chin itſelf hung in many a reduplication over his neck, which it entirely hid.—Such was Mr. Nevil.

Frederic next glanced round the room with the eager eye of jealouſy, in ſearch of his rival; but, what were his ſenſations, when, ſeated next to his Emma, he diſcovered a young man, whoſe manly elegant perſon was the union of beauty and ſtrength, and

and whoſe open intelligent countenance was fixed upon her's with an expreſſion of earneſtneſs and delight?

As Frederic entered, Mrs. Nevil ſtiffly bowed to him; Nevil looked at him with ſurpriſe and anger; Emma bluſhed, and young Haywood aroſe from his ſeat. Politely bowing to the whole company, and deſiring Mr. Haywood to reſume his ſeat, Frederic addreſſed himſelf to Mrs. Nevil.

"I grieve, madam," ſaid he, in a voice of trepidation, "to interrupt you thus unſeaſonably; but the importance of the buſineſs I have to communicate to you, will, I hope, plead my excuſe."

The diſpleaſure which appeared in the countenance of Mrs. Nevil, now changed to ſurpriſe.

"You come from Mr. Montague, your uncle, I preſume, ſir?"

Before Frederic could anſwer, Nevil, who now underſtood his quality, aroſe, and, bowing awkwardly—"I aſk pardon, ſir," ſaid he, "didn't know you before; hope the 'Squire and all's well?"

Frederic thanked him, begged he would make no apology, and then turned to Mrs. Nevil,——

"My buſineſs, madam," ſaid he, "is of a nature that will not admit of diſcuſſion before ſo many witneſſes," glancing his eye at Haywood.

"Well, well, 'Squire," cried Nevil, "you ſee we're at breakfaſt, you may as well—no offence I hope—you may as well, I ſay, take a bit with us; and when 'tis done, Frank and Emmy you may go out of the room, and then we ſhall hear what you have got to ſay."

Frederic accepted the offer, although his preſent ſituation was far from pleaſant; the angry coldneſs of Mrs. Nevil, the evident confuſion of Emma, hurt, while the forward inſolence of Nevil diſguſted him; but the torment of jealouſy ſoon ſubſided; his open mind could not harbour ſuſpicion, after the confeſſion which had paſſed the lips of Emma the preceding evening; he could not doubt; he knew her heart was his, and he gazed on her with fond tranſport: on his late-

late-dreaded rival he looked rather with pity; while the decent propriety of his manners and converſation, excited his eſteem: but yet a pang would ſometimes ſhoot acroſs his heart when he viewed Emma and Haywood together, and recollected the united manner in which Nevil had mentioned them; but this was momentary, and reaſon quickly ſubdued it.

As ſoon as breakfaſt was over, Mr. Haywood and Emma retired.

"You may now ſpeak without reſerve, ſir," ſaid Mrs. Nevil, "as I do not conceal any of my affairs from my brother."

Frederic, after ſome heſitation, related the late converſation he had with his uncle, enlarged upon the independance which was promiſed him when of age; adding, that as the material objection was removed, he hoped Mrs. Nevil would no longer oppoſe his love for her daughter, which he painted in lively colours.

Nevil, who had liſtened to him while he was ſpeaking, as if he doubted whether he heard aright, as ſoon as he had ended,

looking at him with aſtoniſhment and incredulity,—

"Are you in earneſt, 'Squire!" ſaid he.

"Certainly, ſir."

"And will you marry her?"

"Heavens! what do you mean? to be ſure I will."

"Then, by the Lord!" cried Nevil, ſtriking a great blow on the table, "you ſhall have her;—give us your hand—'tis a bargain."

"Mr. Montague," cried Mrs. Nevil, "you are miſtaken in ſuppoſing what you have mentioned to be my only objection; I mentioned ſeveral others to you, if you will pleaſe to recollect, which, I aſſure you, are full as important in my eſtimation; beſides, my conſent is now impoſſible, as my daughter is under engagement to Mr. Haywood."

"Under engagement to the devil!" vociferated her brother, "what the plague would the woman have?—here's a young man worth twenty thouſand pounds when he comes of age, and the Lord knows what when his uncle dies, and ſhe won't ſtrike while the iron is hot."

Frederic

Frederic was about to thank him for his conſent, when, catching the reproachful eye of Mrs. Nevil, he ran and threw himſelf at her feet; he apologiſed with contrition for his late improper behaviour, entreated her to favour him, repreſenting the conſent of his uncle as of little conſequence, vowing eternal conſtancy, offering to give any ſecurity, and concluding with ſaying he neither could nor would outlive the loſs of Emma.

Her affection for him pleaded equally ſtrongly with Mrs. Nevil. After again urging her former obligations and making ſome reſiſtance, ſhe at length yielded, much to the ſatisfaction of Nevil, who had liſtened with much impatience to this ſcene, and fretted to ſee his ſiſter-in-law act, as he thought, ſo much like a fool. He then rang the bell violently; Nancy appeared.

"Send Miſs Emma here directly," ſaid he.

In a few minutes Miſs Nevil, breathleſs and alarmed, entered the room.

"Ho! Emmy," ſaid Nevil, "I ſent for you upon a very particular thing;—you muſt give up all thoughts of Haywood,

becauſe I don't deſign you to have him; and as Mr. Montague here has taken a fancy to you, why I've ſettled he's to have you as ſoon as he comes of age."

Emma, though much ſhocked at the groſs abruptneſs of this ſpeech, yet could not prevent the delight which ſwelled in her heart, from riſing to her cheeks; ſhe turned with a timid and enquiring look to her mother.

"Your uncle ſpeaks my ſentiments, my dear girl," ſaid Mrs. Nevil; "I have long obſerved your mutual affection; I have long grieved that prudence oppoſed it: I could even now wiſh Mr. Montague, that your rank had been leſs exalted; but it is too late now to talk of objections. Love each other then, my children," cried ſhe, taking a hand of each; "you have been brought up equally innocent; you are every way formed for each other;—continue in the path of virtue; continue faithful, and certain happineſs will lie before you."

Emma, no longer able to contain her emotions, ſunk into a ſeat beſide her mother, and wept aloud; while Frederic, the tears ſtanding

ſtanding in his eyes, thanked Mrs. Nevil in the warmeſt terms of gratitude.

"Aye, aye!" cried Nevil, "that's ſpeaking ſomething like, ſiſter; that's right, wiſh them happy, and all that:—but ſtay, young gentleman, pray what age may you be?"

"Nineteen," ſaid Frederic.

"And Emma's ſeventeen," rejoined Nevil; "that's very young to be ſure; but, however, that can't be helped, and you'll grow old faſt enough: but yet I think 'tis beſt not to let the old one know any thing about this buſineſs, for fear of accidents."

"Let whom know, ſir?" cried Frederic, ſomewhat offended.

"Oh, I beg pardon; your uncle, Mr. Montague, ſir; I ſay, perhaps he mayn't like it quite ſo well, ſo 'tis beſt kept quiet, till ſuch time as you're your own maſter. So we won't break with the Haywoods, only civilly tell them, ſhe's too young, and all that, that they mayn't be ſet a gueſſing; and above all, Emma, don't you get talking about it to that little minx your maid, becauſe you'd as good give the crier a groat at once."

Both Frederic and Emma felt a conſciouſneſs of ſomething wrong in this ſecrecy, a ſomething which their hearts revolted againſt; but prudence too ſtrongly ſeconded the advice, unleſs they would reſolve to give up all the hopes which made them happy, and that was impoſſible. The rude and groſs manner in which Nevil mentioned it, added not a little to their perplexity and uneaſineſs; yet, after ſome heſitation, they promiſed to obſerve the ſtricteſt ſecrecy.

"Not that it would ſignify," continued he, "only your uncle, 'Squire, they tell me, is terrible proud and all that; and ſo he would not chooſe you to marry a farmer's daughter; elſe, for the matter of money, I ſhall give her, as ſhe marries to my liking, a pretty tolerable fortune as times go, on her wedding-day; and, by-and-by, when I have kicked the bucket, I fancy you'll find my bones pretty good picking, for I ſhall leave her all I'm worth: and, after all, money's the main matter; there was my brother Ned, what did my father do with him, all for the ſake of pride?—brought him up a

clergyman, forſooth, to be a gentleman, and then be ſtarved upon a curacy of thirty pounds a year; married a fine lady not worth a groat, and died, and left his widow and child for me to take care of."

Frederic was the principal perſon who was ſhocked by this unfeeling ſpeech; Mrs. Nevil herſelf had too long been accuſtomed to ſimilar ones to notice this, otherwiſe than by a dignified and contemptuous ſilence.

"Well," continued Nevil, "I think 'tis now ſettled; ſo, young gentleman, you're welcome to viſit my niece whenever you pleaſe, only mind you an't found out, that's all. But now all fair, and above board,—no under-hand work, you know,—no double-dealing,—no miſtakes;" winking ſignificantly, and nodding his head.

The beauty, the wit, nay even the meaning of this hint, were wholly loſt to the innocent auditors; Frederic and Emma ſtared at him with unmixed and unaffected ſurpriſe; when Mrs. Nevil addreſſed herſelf to him with no ſmall degree of indignation—

"Your ignorance of Mr. Montague's character,"

character," ſaid ſhe, "can alone excuſe your ſtrange inſinuation; your doubts of his honour are equally groundleſs and injurious."

"Well, well," cried Nevil, "I did not mean any harm; only there's no truſting young men; howſoever, Mr. Montague, I aſk pardon."

Frederic had almoſt forgotten the hour, and the impropriety of his abſence from B——, when Mrs. Nevil reminded him of it, and repreſented the danger he would incur.

"You will, I hope," ſaid he, "permit me to renew my viſit to day."

"I can have no objection," returned Mrs. Nevil; "but will your too frequent viſits be prudent?"

"Aye, true," cried her brother, "we muſt be careful of that: you had better not come again 'Squire before to-morrow or next day, for fear."

"To-morrow morning then," ſaid Frederic.

Mrs. Nevil acquieſced. He then took the hand of Emma, preſſed it to his lips, bowed to Mr. and Mrs. Nevil, and departed.

Frederic

Frederic had now attained what he once thought to be the ſummit of his wiſhes; Emma, the lovely Emma, was his, both by her own conſent and that of her friends; a year, not very diſtant, would ſee them united; yet he felt ſomething in his mind, which damped his ſpirits and overclouded all his happineſs: his attachment was clandeſtine, it was degrading to himſelf, it was humiliating to the object of his affection; it might be, it was more than probable that it would be, diſcovered; and the conſequences which would attend ſuch a diſcovery, he trembled to think of: it was not the rage of his uncle, or the contemptuous ſatire of Cecilia, that he moſt anxiouſly dreaded; but the idea of the ſilent upbraiding looks of Mrs. Montague, whom he loved and reſpected; looks, which would but too juſtly reproach him with falſehood and ingratitude, cut him to the heart; he might excuſe himſelf for concealing this affair from his harſh and paſſionate uncle; but to carry it thus far, to fix ſo important an affair beyond the power of recall, without even conſulting

conſulting her, who, bound by no tye but that of humanity, had ſhewn all the kindneſs, the affection of a mother; this no reaſoning could juſtify, no excuſe could palliate; he felt all title to her eſteem, all claim to her affection, was gone for ever. It was now too late to confeſs, it would only afflict her, becauſe his fate was united to that of Emma, by the ſolemn profeſſions he had made; and even if he could, for the ſake of Mrs. Montague, reſolve to relinquiſh all his own hopes of happineſs, to trifle with, to deſtroy thoſe of Miſs Nevil, he could not think of but with horror.

The ſweet image of Emma, however, the conſciouſneſs of poſſeſſing her affection, ſhone through this gloom, and reſtored comfort and peace to the breaſt of Frederic; he hoped that Mrs. Montague, always candid, reaſonable, and juſt, might, in time approve of his attachment; to temporary concealment he determined to ſubmit; and as the farm which Montague held, lay in the way to L——, he was the leſs liable to ſuſpicion.

Frederic, on his return, found the family yet

yet at breakfaſt; and he was more than ever ſtruck with the ſatirical looks of Cecilia, and the peculiar manner in which ſhe enquired about his early walk and late return. Unable any longer to endure the ſuſpicions he too plainly ſaw ſhe harboured, he determined, as he well knew her generoſity of ſentiment, to confeſs the whole affair; he therefore, as ſoon as breakfaſt was over, requeſted her company in the park.

"Oh, certainly," ſaid ſhe, "I ſhall be but too happy in receiving ſo rare an honour."

In a few minutes, declaring ſhe was ready to attend him, they ſet out.

Frederic followed her ſome time, too much intimidated both by her voice and manner, to ſpeak; at length—

"Cecilia," ſaid he, "I entreat your confidence and advice upon a ſubject of much importance."

Cecilia made a full ſtop, turned round, and looking at him with ſatirical enquiry,

"What can be coming now?" ſaid ſhe.

"You remember," rejoined Frederic, "the

"the affair which happened about a month ago; I mean when I was ſo fortunate as to meet with Miſs Nevil?"

"Oh, dear!" interrupted Cecilia, "you may ſpare yourſelf the trouble of ſpeaking; the whole of your important affair is ſufficiently public, I believe; at leaſt it is no ſecret to me. What now? what are you ſo ſurpriſed at?—it is nothing extraordinary: I have heard nothing elſe from Jenny theſe three weeks."

"And is it from Jenny?" cried Frederic, with ſome degree of warmth, "that you condeſcend to receive information? is there no perſon you can liſten to with propriety, that you are compelled to liſten to the idle tales of your ſervant?"

"Nay, don't be angry, Frederic," ſaid Cecilia, "nor ſuppoſe that I encourage her forwardneſs; but if ſhe will chooſe to talk, I muſt chooſe to liſten; and to ſilence her, I believe, even you, grave as you are, would find impoſſible."

"It is high time then," ſaid Frederic, "to take away the impreſſion which her

ſtories

ſtories have no doubt made upon you, and to confeſs the real truth—"

"No," interrupted Cecilia, "I muſt beg leave not to be indulged with your confidence on that head."

"And why not?"

"On the ſtories of Jenny, I have no right to beſtow attention or credit; if you confeſs, I muſt believe; and what I have heard, I aſſure you I had much rather have reaſon to doubt."

"Yet, Cecilia, I entreat you—"

"One word, Frederic, and you will entreat me no longer; what I have heard, as coming from Jenny, I have no right to regard; but if you confide it to me, I become your partner and accomplice; and would not ſuch a ſituation be degrading? would not duty, propriety, nay even decency compel me to betray you?"

"Cecilia, my dear Cecilia," cried Frederic, "I thank you; yes, you are right; I would not degrade you by ſharing a diſſimulation which has robbed me of my own eſteem; and to be betrayed, is to be ruined!

but

but at leaſt pity and ſpare me; I aſſure you I ſuffer equal to my fault."

"I do pity you, Frederic," ſaid Cecilia, "for no one can excite pity more juſtly than thoſe who have forfeited their own eſteem; and I will ſpare you, by inſtantly changing the ſubject."

She then began to diſcourſe on indifferent ſubjects; but Frederic was melancholy and abſent; and Cecilia, who, when his dulneſs had ariſen from ſpleen and diſcontent, delighted to torment him, now he had real cauſe for uneaſineſs, compaſſionated, forgave him, and was ſilent. They ſoon after ſeparated; Cecilia returned to her mother, and Frederic ſauntered to the farm.

CHAP. XV.

THE next morning brought with it new hopes and new happineſs. Frederic took advantage of the permiſſion which had been given him to viſit Miſs Nevil, and upon enquiring

enquiring for her, was immediately admitted.

Emma was alone, and received him with viſible pleaſure; but the trace of anxiety was ſtill viſible in her countenance, and the languor of watchfulneſs had ſpread paleneſs on her cheek. Frederic obſerved her with much uneaſineſs; he enquired eagerly after her health, and upon her aſſuring him that ſhe was perfectly well, a ſad ſurmiſe croſſed his mind, that the determination of her uncle in his favour on the preceding evening, was diſpleaſing to her: her manner, however, and converſation wholly diſſipated this idea; and Frederic, re-aſſured of the certainty of poſſeſſing her affections, forgot all the unhappineſs which his own reproaches and the ſevere coolneſs of Cecilia had occaſioned him on the preceding day.

The morning was beautiful; and, as Mrs. Nevil and her brother had not yet ariſen, Frederic propoſed a walk in the fields, until the breakfaſt hour ſhould arrive; to this Miſs Nevil readily aſſented.

The fields, already yellow with the harveſt, were

were the picture of plenty and happineſs; and the lovely face of Nature added to the delight of Frederic, and raiſed his ſpirits to an uncommon pitch: he was expatiating with all the ardor of exultation on his own happineſs, and his hopes of its continuance, when a deep ſigh from Emma at once interrupted and alarmed him.

"Emma," ſaid he, "are not you then happy?"

"Happy!" repeated ſhe, "yes, I believe —I hope ſo!"

"You believe! you hope!—what, are you going to make me miſerable again?"

"No, Mr. Montague, I would not make you miſerable for the world."

"Then why do you ſigh, my love?—Oh, if after all you do not love me!"

"I have never doubted you," ſaid ſhe, "why then do you ſuſpect me of inſincerity? but yet I cannot be quite happy."

"Not be happy! and is it I who prevent you?"

"Oh, no! that cannot be. Ah, Mr. Montague! after all I have ſaid, you ought not

not to admit ſuch ſuſpicions; but reflect upon my ſituation,—you viſit at our houſe unauthoriſed by your family; you dare not confeſs your viſits to them; you dread their reſentment to yourſelf, their contempt for us; Miſs Montague, your couſin, would think herſelf diſgraced"—

"By heaven!" interrupted Frederic, "if Cecilia dares breathe a word againſt my love, I will that inſtant renounce her!—But, my dear Emma, how does this concern you?—when of age, I ſhall be totally independent of them; I grieve indeed that an humiliating concealment ſhould be neceſſary, but at preſent it is unavoidable."

"No, ſir!" interrupted Emma," by no means unavoidable;—I but too plainly ſee, my mother diſapproves of it; *her* ſenſe of propriety has been vanquiſhed by her love for me; but my hope of happineſs ſhall be ſacrificed to *my own*. Frederic, we muſt part! or at leaſt I never will be your's without the approbation of your family."

"Emma!" exclaimed Frederic, "is it poſſible?—do you then renounce me? but I was deceived, you never loved me!"

"Ungenerous Frederic!" cried Emma, her eyes filling with tears; "and can I no otherwiſe convince you of my love, than by forfeiting your eſteem? Oh, reflect what diſgraceful conſtructions will be put upon your clandeſtine viſits!—No, Frederic! although I never will marry another, I will not diſgrace you by ſuffering you to ally yourſelf to one, whoſe name has been diſgraced, even by yourſelf!"

"And will you, Emma," cried Frederic, "will you deſtroy mine, and what you declare to be your own happineſs, for the ſake of an abſurd punctilio?"

"If you really eſteemed me, Mr. Montague," returned Miſs Nevil with ſome warmth, "you would not conſider a proper regard to my honour as an abſurd punctilio."

"If I really eſteemed you!—oh, Emma! ſay but what I ſhall do to convince you."

"You muſt give the world no room to cenſure me; I truſt to your underſtanding to ſuggeſt what conduct will be proper; to your eſteem, your love, to purſue it."

"And I will purſue it!" cried Frederic with

with vehemence, "whatever it may coſt me. In a few years I can demand you openly, properly; but meanwhile I hope that ſome times you will allow me to ſee, to ſpeak to you, to declare my firm, my unaltered love! Ah, Emma! I can ſubmit to any thing if you will not quite forget me, quite caſt me from you!—if I may hope ſome future time ——" he pauſed.

"Forget you, Mr. Montague!" repeated Emma, ſighing; "no, that will never be!—But let us return;" continued ſhe haſtily, endeavouring to ſuppreſs the riſing tears; "to you my honour is confided,—you will not betray the truſt."

Frederic again proteſted, but repeated his hopes, that ſhe would not refuſe him, when independent; to which Emma at length conſented, and they returned to the houſe. Frederic, as before, ſtayed to breakfaſt, and then took his leave.

As he approached the hall, he was met by Cecilia, quite out of breath—

"Oh, Frederic!" cried ſhe, "I have been looking for you every where; I have

one of the moſt delightful things in the world to tell you."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; and I pity your curioſity, or I ſhould make you gueſs: to come to the point then,—you know our houſe is the moſt miſerable ſolitary place in the world."

"And is this your delightful intelligence?"

"Pſha! no certainly; what do you interrupt me for?—well, there is *ſcarce* a tolerable perſon in it."

"Oh, I thank you," cried Frederic, "for the compliment of your implied exception."

"Oh, you are much miſtaken, I certainly did not intend to except you; but I wiſh you would not interrupt me, for I have not a moment to ſpare; only conſider, I have all my drawers to look over, all my things to try on, two hours to practice on the harp, an hour on the piano-forte, and to ſend Thomas to C—— for a thouſand things which I want."

"Your concern at my ſuſpence," cried Frederic, "ſeems wonderfully abated."

"Well,

"Well, well, no matter, I cannot help it; but, Frederic, prepare for rapture;—actually, really, and without joking, we are going to have company!"

"Company!"

"Yes; could you have conceived it?—my aunt and I, who are very good friends ever ſince the *fracas*, were walking this morning early, and when we had talked an hour, and I began to be quite tired of her, ſhe told me that my father had received a letter late laſt night from Mr. Dalby, informing him that he intended to call upon him in his way to town. Now, this Mr. Dalby you have heard my father ſpeak about; he was his ſchool fellow; he has a wife and ſon, my aunt ſays; and although he has been a merchant, and his wife was nobody, yet they are very tolerable people. And does not this give you delight?"

"Not quite ecſtaſy, I muſt own; but where are they coming from?"

"From Harwich; and as my father has frequently invited him ſince he left off buſi-

neſs, he takes this opportunity of paying him a viſit." Then, declaring ſhe had not another moment to loſe, away ſhe flew.

Dalby was the younger ſon of a good family; but as its wealth was not well proportioned to its ſize, he had been obliged to ſubmit to the degradation, as it was conſidered, of reſiding in the city, and becoming a merchant. His manners, his morals, and his ſentiments, were certainly not of the firſt order; but for the deficiency, the great wealth he had acquired amply compenſated; and as he had now removed to the *weſt end of the town*, that circumſtance, together with his connections and fortune, had introduced him in the firſt circles. Early in life, he had married an old and diſagreeable woman; whoſe defects, however, were overlooked in conſideration of the aſſiſtance her wealth afforded him; and, as in a few years ſhe realized his hopes of being left its ſole poſſeſſor, he had conſulted his taſte and inclination in marrying a ruſtic beauty, with whom he had accidentally become acquainted, in an excurſion into the country.

This

This lady, who for two-and-twenty years had been ſtudying to be elegant, was now arrived at what ſhe conceived to be the *ne plus ultra*; her beauty indeed was gone; but as ſhe ſtill denominated herſelf, 'a fine perſonable woman;' every ornament was employed:—the ſevereſt trammels of whalebone confined her luſty ſhape, while her ſhoulders were *braced* with intenſity the moſt cruel; and the elegant, the gradual taper of her waiſt was admirably contraſted and ſe off, where nature uncontrouled aſſerted her rights: her countenance, where the roſe had long entirely ſupplanted the lily, ſhone with majeſtic grandeur between the ſtreaming locks, whoſe Gorgonian appearance would have inſpired terror, had not the eaſy inſignificance of the countenance wholly prevented that effect. To this elegance of perſon, Mrs. Dalby had likewiſe taken care to add an equal improvement of mind; ſhe had learned by rote the names of every public place—the names and excellence of every actor or ſinger who was admired—could deſcant upon them, and upon every article of

dreſs and equipage with amazing fluency,—and in ſhort every thing which was neceſſary for a woman in high life to be acquainted with: and, in order to conquer the unfortunate provinciality of her dialect, ſhe had practiſed a certain gutteral ſound, which, together with an elegant liſp, concealed in a great meaſure that defect.

George, their only ſon, was about one-and-twenty; he had been educated in the firſt ſtyle: from an early age he had been placed at Eton, from whence he had gone in courſe to the Univerſity, and brought home as much learning as is cuſtomary with, or neceſſary for, the character of a gentleman. His perſon was handſome, and on his open florid countenance good-nature and cheerfulneſs always ſhone; his manners ſhewed a lively contraſt to thoſe of his parents; eaſy, gay, and volatile, his air, though natural, was elegant, though poliſhed, yet not affected; polite, yet frank and open, his good manners were not the reſult of education or art, but flowed from native good humour, and a deſire of pleaſing.

Such

Such was the ſociety, whoſe arrival was to bring relief from melancholy to the ſecluded family of Montague. The friendſhip between the father's of Montague and Dalby, had been warm and conſtant; if however it had been tranſmitted to the ſons, it had long lain in a dormant ſtate; Montague had coveted no ſociety, much leſs that of one, whoſe ſituation in life would render intimacy a diſgrace; but that ſituation was now altered, and as, when ſchool-boys together, although Dalby was much the elder, a great friendſhip had ſubſiſted between them, many reaſons now concurred to make a revival of it by no means unwelcome to Montague. Dalby, who had long anxiouſly ſought an opportunity, now gladly ſeized the preſent, to convince his haughty friend that himſelf was by no means unworthy of his acquaintance.

Their meeting therefore was in ſome degree cordial, although rather ſtiffened by pride on both ſides. Mrs. Montague and Miſs Margaret were cheered and exhilarated by their arrival, as it promiſed to the one a relief

a relief from melancholy, to the other from ſpleen. Frederic, by no means happy in his own reflections, was glad to have them diverted by the amuſement the new viſitors promiſed to afford; and Cecilia, charmed with the expectation of novelty and of ſociety, which ſhe ſuppoſed muſt be ſo much pleaſanter than any which ſhe had hitherto known, was wild with rapture: Dr. Evans too, who was very high in her eſteem, was invited to be of the party.

Under ſuch circumſtances, the reception which Mrs. Dalby and her ſon met with, could not fail of being highly flattering; and George was ſo much delighted with the expreſſion of pleaſure evident in the countenance of Frederic when he was introduced to him, that he ſhook hands with him with all the warmth and freedom of ancient friendſhip, and immediately entered into converſation with him and Cecilia with all the eaſe of intimacy: Miſs Margaret meanwhile entered into ſtiff diſcourſe with Mrs. Dalby, while her brother and Mrs. Montague were engaged with Dalby and Dr. Evans.

"You

"You have been at Harwich," cried Cecilia, addreſſing herſelf to George;—"I have heard it is a pleaſant place."

"Oh, intolerable! dull to a degree;—don't you prefer Brighton?"

"I really never ſaw it."

"I do not much reliſh the idea either of that or Margate; Weymouth is the only tolerable public place we have."

"I have no doubt of it," replied Cecilia; "but really, if you mean to mention any place within the ſphere of our knowledge, you muſt not go beyond C— or Tilbury fort; theſe being the uttermoſt boundaries of our travels."

"Then," returned George, "you are extremely enviable, in not having viſited every place which calls itſelf public, until you have forgotten the idea of half, and deteſt that of the reſt; thoſe delights are yet to come; the ſcene lies wide before you; but you muſt arm yourſelves with courage, reſolution, and fortitude, to go through the enjoyment."

"And you find thoſe virtues indiſpenſibly

requiſite, to purſue the path which you recommend from experience?"

"Alas! no; I do not poſſeſs either of them, and am abſolutely ſinking with *ennui*, diſſatisfaction, and fatigue; I really have not reſolution enough to be happy."

"And as many, no doubt, are in the ſame predicament, it is ſtrange that all do not faulter and give up the purſuit."

"Ah! you would be ſurpriſed when we are fatigued, ſpent, covered with duſt, and vapoured to death, at the difficulty you would find in convincing us that we are not actually in poſſeſſion of happineſs; but to perſuade us that we are not in the road to it, even the eloquence of Cicero would fail."

"That I can eaſily conceive," ſaid Frederic, "ſince this enjoyment, as you term it, is voluntary."

"Voluntary! Oh, by no means; we are compelled to enjoy all theſe things: one might as well be ignorant of the Scotch ſtep, or the rules of an aſſembly, as not to have made a tour to the lakes, and viſited all the public places, and be able to deſcant upon

them with rapture; you may ſuppoſe then, that it would be inſufferable ignorance and ruſticity."

"And the poſſeſſion of thoſe two qualities," cried Cecilia, laughing, "has induced you to conſider us enviable."

"You will forgive my rudeneſs, I hope," returned George, "when I inform you, that I have it in contemplation to become both abſurd and ridiculous."

"And how ſo?"

"Why the four terms I have uſed are quite technical, and the diſtinction is very nice: thoſe who have never been in the *firſt* ſociety, and gone through the firſt fatigues, are ignorant and ruſtic; but if theſe have been experienced, and a perſon has been received, and then forſakes the diſtinguiſhed path, he then becomes abſurd and ridiculous. This cenſure I have ſome thoughts of incurring;—I think of giving up the world at once, and becoming a hermit.

"Then as a remedy to diſcontent, I would adviſe you and my couſin to change places; you deteſt ſolitude, I think, Frederic?"

"Solitude," anſwered Frederic, "I muſt confeſs is not deſirable; but certainly I love retirement."

"If any thing is to be underſtood by your diſtinction," replied Cecilia, "I ſuppoſe you mean that you would limit your ſociety, to that of a few perſons ſelected by yourſelf; and you would, no doubt, give proofs of your diſcernment in that ſelection."

Frederic bluſhed at the look which accompanied theſe words; but before he could reply, Dr. Evans joined them.

"Oh, Doctor," continued Cecilia, "I have the moſt extraordinary thing in the world to tell you; theſe gentlemen are panting for the delight of retirement!—I beg your pardon, I ſpeak improperly; one is anxious for total ſecluſion, the other is felicitating himſelf on the enjoyment of a ſelect ſociety; which circumſtance, while it compliments my vanity, much confuſes my comprehenſion."

"Your couſin, then," ſaid the Doctor, "I am happy to find has much changed his opinion."

"Yes,"

"Yes," returned Cecilia, "together with his plans and principles:" then, obſerving the confuſion of Frederic, and ſurpriſe of Dr. Evans—"his principles," ſhe continued, "in ſuppoſing it right to be diſcontented, and his plans, in appearing ſo. But Dr. Evans, I was going to obſerve to you, that Mr. Dalby, weary of his preſent ſituation, is anxious to change it for the calm, the ſerene delights of an hermitage; perhaps you could aſſiſt him in the choice of a ſuitable ſpot."

"I cannot ſuppoſe Mr. Dalby ſo much his own enemy, as to wiſh to change his *preſent* ſituation," ſaid the Doctor.

"You do me juſtice, ſir," ſaid George, "certainly any change would ſuffer by the compariſon."

"That may be very well by way of a compliment," ſaid Cecilia, "but certainly has nothing to do with the ſubject: at preſent, perhaps, we are all very well ſatisfied; but, in a ſhort time we ſhall again be weary of ſolitude and ſameneſs, and Mr. Dalby fatigued by company and variety; now, as his wiſh is certainly within his power to accom-

pliſh, it is a pity he ſhould not take the proper method."

"If Mr. Dalby, is ſo very anxious to commence hermit," ſaid Dr. Evans, laughing, "and you apply to me to recommend a favourable ſpot for his contemplations; I do not know any more pleaſant than the neighbourhood of B——."

"L——, for inſtance," ſaid Cecilia, "is elevated and beautiful; what is your opinion, Frederic? can you recommend it?"

"L——!" ſaid Frederic, confuſed, "yes, certainly, I believe ſo."

"You have never been there, perhaps," ſaid Cecilia.

Frederic looked vexed and angry; nor were his ſenſations more agreeable when, upon Dr. Evans's ſpeaking highly of the beauties of L——, George propoſed a walk thither for the next day. Dinner being announced, then put an end to the converſation.

Many formal compliments paſſed between Montague and the elder Dalby; and after many repetitions of thanks and excuſes,

Mr.

Mr. and Mrs. Dalby, agreed to remain a week at Montague hall, declaring that at the end of that time they were under the neceſſity of going to Brighton.

In this new and agreeable ſociety, Frederic almoſt forgot his uneaſineſs, and was as gay and happy as he appeared to be; but, even now, the recollection of Emma would intrude, and ſometimes caſt a gloom upon his countenance; for, pleaſant as the party was, the converſation of each individual ſuffered miſerbly by a compariſon with that of Mrs. and Miſs Nevil, at leaſt in his eſtimation; and often, in the midſt of his mirth and gaiety, his heart ſickened, and longed to be with them.

At night, as ſoon as he was alone, he gave way, without reſtraint, to his feelings; and lamented the delicacy, which he admired, becauſe it debared him from the chief pleaſure of his life—the company of his love. He could not, however, be wholly inſenſible of the acquiſition he had attained in his new acquaintance; George had already made great progreſs in his eſteem; but Frederic had

had ſo long ſuffered himſelf to view the unpleaſant ſide of things, that melancholy was become habitual, and his thoughts choſe rather to dwell on a vexatious ſubject than a pleaſing one; painful reflection, as uſual, deprived him of reſt: and it was not until a late hour that he appeared in the breakfaſt-room.

"Upon my word, young man," ſaid Mr. Dalby as he entered, "you are not one of the moſt early riſers."

"Oh, dear! I beg leave to exculpate my couſin there; I aſſure you in general he riſes with the ſun."

"It is very good for the health," obſerved Mrs. Dalby.

"And for the ſpirits too;" rejoined Cecilia, "eſpecially with the addition of a long walk before breakfaſt."

Cecilia in the preſent flow of her ſpirits, had quite forgotten her promiſe of forbearance; ſtruck, however, by the look of reproach which ſhe obſerved in the face of Frederic—

"I accompanied you once, you know, Frederic,"

Frederic," ſhe continued, "it was a charming excurſion, and if I recollect right, we were remarkably pleaſing to each other."

"Doubtleſs," ſaid George, "but I hope theſe excurſions will now be renewed, and that I may be admitted of the party."

Cecilia and Frederic readily aſſented, and it was fixed for the next morning.

When breakfaſt was over, Mrs. Dalby, after much deliberation, and ſtaring about the room, demanded what day of the week it was?

"Why, Jenny, why, my dear," ſaid Dalby, "you're ſhocking forgetful: what! have you put your religion in your pocket? why it is Sunday."

"Oh, dear William," returned ſhe languidly, "it is impoſſible to remember all theſe ſort of things; one can't always be ſtudying an almanack."

"I wonder what it is you do ſtudy," returned her huſband, "not your bible, I believe."

"Oh! it is too fatiguing to ſtudy any thing; you know, my dear, my nerves cannot ſupport it." "Oh,

Oh, it is certainly very wrong, either to watch the progreſs of time, or to ſtudy the dictates of religion," cried Cecilia, "leſt we ſhould chance to perceive that we have waſted the one, and neglected the other; and either of thoſe recollections might impel us to exertions, which, in this hot weather, would be inſufferable."

"Very true, Miſs Cecilia," ſaid Mrs. Dalby, who had not attended to one half of the ſpeech, and miſunderſtood the reſt.

"Very true, is it Jenny?" ſaid Dalby, "yes, and very ſevere too."

George coloured and bit his lip; and Mrs. Montague, much diſpleaſed, turned confuſedly to Mrs. Dalby,

"Perhaps you would like to go to church, madam?" ſaid ſhe, "if ſo, I will order the coach."

"Oh, la! no ma'am," replied Mrs. Dalby, "I beg you would not give yourſelf that trouble; I could not bear to be ſtewed up this ſultry day. Are you going to church, ma'am?" addreſſing herſelf to Miſs Margaret, who was riſing.

"To

"To church ma'am?" repeated that lady, "no, certainly," and ſhe ſtalked out of the room.

"No heat, I believe," ſaid Montague, "will detain my ſiſter from the conventicle, to hear ſedition preached."

"You will, however, go to church my dear Frederic," ſaid Mrs. Montague, "and your friend, Mr. George Dalby, will perhaps accompany you."

"Certainly," ſaid George, "this inſtant."

"But to which church will you go?" enquired Cecilia.

"B—— undoubtedly," ſaid Frederic.

"But there is no ſervice at B—— this morning; what think you of L——?"

"Oh, ridiculous! that is too far."

"L——!" repeated George; "that is the ſpot Dr. Evans recommended to me; I ſhould like to ſurvey it of all things; come then, Montague, or we ſhall be too late." wiſhing the ladies good morning, he hurried out of the room, and Frederic followed.

"Dalby," ſaid he, as they walked along the road, "we had better not go to L——, I think." "And

"And why not?"

"It is too far; we ſhall certainly be too late."

"Oh, never mind; it is the moſt genteel thing in the world, to come in at the ſecond leſſon."

"That does not prove that it is either proper or deſirable."

"But how far is it?"

"Two miles."

"A prodigious diſtance!—and do you really think we cannot walk two miles in half an hour? and they do not ſurely begin before eleven."

"No; but D—— is much pleaſanter."

"But why have you ſuch a very particular diſlike to L——? I wiſh to go to reconnoitre you know."

"Well, Dalby, I cannot go to L——," ſaid Frederic, impatiently.

"Oh, there is ſomething more in this than I am aware of," ſaid George, laughing; "and now I recollect you bluſhed every time Miſs Montague mentioned the place; perhaps—"

"Pſha,

"Pſha, ridiculous!" cried Frederic; "come, will you go?—this is the way to D——"

"Of what conſequence is that to me? I am not going there."

"What do you mean to do then?"

"Oh, this part of the road is very pleaſant; and I am inclined to wait juſt as long as you pleaſe; but when I do move, L—— is the place of my deſtination."

Frederic repenting that he had raiſed ſuſpicion by his repugnance, now was determined to yield; although the idea of ſeeing Miſs Nevil without being able to ſpeak to her, was a puniſhment, which he almoſt wanted reſolution ſufficient to ſupport.

"Well then," ſaid he, "if you are ſo very anxious, let us go by all means; I can have no objection but to the heat and fatigue."

"Indeed! and pray how far is it to D—."

"D——! Oh, I don't know exactly; I don't recollect."

"Only half a mile perhaps?"

"Oh, more than that."

"A mile and a half?"

"I

"I believe it is farther."

"Not more than two miles?"

"Yes, it certainly is."

"And pray let me aſk, did you prefer it to L—— becauſe the walk would be leſs fatiguing? or becauſe we ſtood a better chance of being in time?"

"Oh, I cannot ſay," ſaid Frederic with ſome confuſion, "I made a miſtake, I believe."

"A very natural one."

Frederic made no anſwer, and George laughing, followed him as he reluctantly led the way to L——.

As they entered the chapel, the firſt perſon who caught the eye of Frederic was Miſs Nevil; but he dared not bow, nor even ſmile, while the penetrating eyes of George were immoveably fixed upon him; what he ſuſpected ſeemed too near the truth for him to hazard a confirmation. For this anxiety, however, he was repaid as they were coming out; Emma paſſed cloſe by him, and while his friend's attention was eſtranged, he preſſed her hand, and enquired after her health;

health; ſhe pronounced an anſwer and his name in a voice and manner that not only compenſated for all his uneaſineſs, but rendered him completely happy. She then haſtily wiſhed him good-morning and paſſed on.

As they walked along the yard, Nancy ran towards them.

"Oh, Mr. Montague!" ſaid ſhe, "I am glad to ſee you, why you hav'nt been near us I don't know when; and I have ſo many things to tell you;—in the firſt place, my maſter—"

"Well, Nancy," ſaid Frederic, "I will hear you another time; at preſent I cannot ſtop."

"Lauk, ſir!" cried ſhe, "I aſk pardon, I did not ſee as you wasn't alone; but may hap you'll call as you go by."

"No, that I cannot do."

"Not do!—lauk, ſure!"

"No, it will not be in my power."

"Oh! do call, ſir."

"I tell you no, Nancy; and I can ſtop no longer."

"Well,

"Well, but I muſt tell you how comfortable we ſhall be when the old fellow is out of the way.—Good bye to ye, ſir;" ſhe courteſied and ran away.

"Really, Montague," ſaid George, "I do beg your pardon; I do not wonder at your reluctance at coming to L—— *accompanied*:—well, upon my ſoul, ſhe's as pretty a girl as ever I ſaw." Frederic looked at him aghaſt, not doubting but he meant Miſs Nevil; "and as kind," added George, "as you could wiſh."

"Who?—who do you mean?" cried Frederic.

"Who?—who do I mean?—why the ſweet little cherry-cheeked damſel, who accoſted you ſo very *mal apropos*."

"Oh, what, my little Nancy!" ſaid Frederic greatly relieved; "yes, I agree with you, ſhe is a very pretty girl."

"And ſhe gave you a very kind invitation; pray where may ſhe live?"

"At the white houſe which we paſſed on the hill I believe; why do you enquire?"

"Ah, Montague! you are a happy fellow;

low; I envy you upon my ſoul: but pray do not let me break in upon you; by all means accept your little Nancy's invitation, eſpecially as the *old fellow will be out of the way*, and you will be ſo *comfortable!*—a capital addendum that."

"Nay, Dalby, now you are deceived."

"Oh, what, ſhe bid you not kiſs and tell, and ſhe did not ſee that you were not alone: well, I commend your prudence; but you ſhould extend its reſtraint to your countenance; that is as indiſcreet, and almoſt as loquacious as your little inamorata."

"This is a language, Mr. Dalby," ſaid Frederic, "I ſo little underſtand—"

"Nay," interrupted George, do not put yourſelf into a heat to convince me of the truth of my conjecture; that proof is unneceſſary; but I am ſo aſhamed of my conduct; I know not how to make reparation."

"I entreat you, Dalby," cried Frederic, "not to be ſo ridiculous; you cannot ſuppoſe that I love Nancy otherwiſe than as my foſter-ſiſter, which ſhe is."

"Your foſter-ſiſter, is ſhe? Oh, then it

is a family affection; very natural that;—you are no doubt an affectionate brother; you love and you *ſupport* her, all in the line of duty."

"You are reſolved to miſconſtrue every thing; but liſten, and I will explain."

"Oh, by no means; I have no right to an explanation; I would not interfere in your affairs, eſpecially thoſe of ſo delicate a nature; I beg that the ſubject may be dropped."

Frederic, then ſuppoſing he was merely in jeſt, laughed with him, little regarding this affair, as no ſuſpicion of the real truth was entertained.

The reſt of the party were walking in the grounds when they returned.

"Well, Mr. Dalby," cried Cecilia as ſoon as ſhe ſaw them, "what do you think of L——? have you fixed upon a ſpot?"

"I am delighted with every part of it," anſwered he.

"But did no one part particularly engage your attention?"

"Yes, I muſt confeſs I was very much ſtruck with the appearance of a white houſe on a hill." "Some

"Some farmer's, I ſuppoſe?"

"We were given to underſtand, I think, were we not, Montague? that the *old fellow was out of the way.*"

"Then, perhaps," purſued Cecilia, "it is kept by a widow; did you ſay you called there?—I mean to reſt yourſelves."

"Why really it would have been very deſirable; but Montague was extremely unwilling."

"Oh, perhaps he does not know the good people, and he was apprehenſive that his intruſion would be unwelcome."

"Such delicacy would have been rather overſtrained after the kind and earneſt invitation which he received."

"In which you no doubt were included."

"Alas, no! I was not obſerved."

"Indeed!—why, Frederic, I am afraid your friends had forgotten their good-breeding."

"The converſation," replied Frederic, ſeems highly agreeable to yourſelves; pardon me if I ſay it is far otherwiſe to me, and you muſt excuſe my partaking it."

He then joined Mrs. Dalby and Miſs Margaret; Cecilia and George, however, followed him.

"How ch—a—rming is all his!" ſaid Mrs. Dalby in an eaſy even animated tone; "I am quite enchanted; only liſten to the ſweet little warblers in the groves, and the ſweet flowers, and the trees!"

"Yes," ſaid Cecilia in the ſame tone, "and the clear fountains, and the purling rills;" pointing to an aha ditch, green and mantled with the heat of ſummer.

"Very true, Miſs Cecilia," ſaid Mrs. Dalby, too ſtiff to turn round to obſerve the object.

"Much cooler and pleaſanter this," ſaid Cecilia, "than being *ſtewed* in a hot church: walking occaſions a ſweet cool breeze around us, which in the middle of the day is very refreſhing"

"You ſhould likewiſe obſerve, Cecilia," ſaid Miſs Margaret, "that people of devout minds and ardent tempers ſhould avoid places of public worſhip in the ſummer; the warmth of the heart, and that of

the perſon together, may hurt the conſtitution."

"And if not," obſerved Cecilia, "it muſt infallibly derange the nerves."

"Eſpecially," rejoined Miſs Margaret, "if they happen to be delicate, which is always the caſe in people of weak tender frames."

"You are very right ma'am" ſaid Mrs. Dalby, "nervous people ought not to go to church."

"You ſhould likewiſe obſerve, my dear madam," ſaid George, "that people of haughty minds and bitter tempers will not not be profited by attending places of public worſhip; religion will degenerate into bigotry, and zeal into rancour."

"And then," purſued Frederic, "it will merely ſerve to enſlave the reaſon, and blind the conſcience, by making them ſuppoſe the obſervance of a ritual a ſufficient ſubſtitute for Chriſtian benignity."

Miſs Margaret toſſed her head, and Cecilia bluſhed deeply; but Mrs. Dalby, wholly at a loſs to comprehend what had been

ſaid, enquired, with a vacant look, what they meant.

"Their meaning," cried Cecilia, "is pretty obvious—a reproof in the form of a diſquiſition."

"Or rather," ſaid Miſs Margaret, "a Chriſtian benignity, which puts the moſt favourable conſtruction upon words and actions."

"True madam," ſaid Cecilia, "but purpoſely to miſconſtrue words, is no compliment to the ſpeaker; and to miſunderſtand obvious intentions, is blindneſs, not charity."

"Well," ſaid Mrs. Dalby, "you are all much above my underſtanding; ſo pray let us change the ſubject."

Mr. Dalby, Mr. and Mrs. Montague then joined them, and the converſation became general.

In the afternoon the whole party went to church, except Miſs Margaret, who attended the conventicle, Mrs. Dalby, who was nervous, and George, who profeſſed himſelf weary. Mrs. Montague offered to remain at home with Mrs. Dalby; but that lady, taking

taking up a new novel, declared that ſhe could amuſe herſelf very well until they returned.

"What have you got there, my dear?" ſaid Dalby juſt as they were ſetting out; "the bible?"

"La, Mr. Dalby! no, to be ſure."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, I only meant by way of a novelty."

"Dear, you make ſuch a fuſs!—I am ſure you never read it yourſelf."

"And ſo, becauſe I go to the devil, you chooſe to go there too, for fear I ſhould be dull going alone; don't be alarmed, my dear, I ſhall have company enough without your making one of the party."

"I declare, William, you're quite groſs; if you are ſo ſhocking, I ſhan't talk to you at all; naming thoſe kind of horrid things!—I am ſure I might do worſe things than juſt reading a novel."

"And that's an excellent reaſon for not doing any better; you think the medium beſt, and you take very good care to avoid

one extreme at leaſt, my dear Jenny;—you'll never be righteous overmuch."

"La, well, Mr. Dalby, I wiſh you would not keep teazing one ſo: as you're grown ſo very religious all of a ſudden, I think you had better be at church; but I ſhan't go, I aſſure you;—and as to reading a novel, I don't ſee any harm in it; do you, Mrs. Montague?"

"Indeed, madam," anſwered Mrs. Montague, "I am too inadequate a judge of my own conduct, to undertake to direct that of others."

"Well, Miſs Montague," ſaid Dalby, "my wife has thought proper to appeal to your mother; now let me aſk you, what do you think of this middling conduct?"

"I think," replied Cecilia, "that as Mrs. ——'s novel will neither do good nor harm, it is quite in character to read it."

"Neither good nor harm!" cried Frederic, "can the nobleſt principles of virtue, expreſſed in the pureſt, the moſt elegant, and captivating ſtyle, fail of doing good?"

"Certainly not, where they happen to be underſtood

underſtood and felt; but you mention virtue; I am glad you did not ſay religion; in that article Mrs. —— adheres very ſtrictly to the middling ſcheme."

"Oh!" cried Montague, "a confounded democrat and an atheiſt!"

"Oh dear, no;" ſaid Cecilia, "certainly not; ſhe does not indeed appear to pay much regard to revelation; but ſhe adores the God of Nature, and mentions him with great reſpect in her beautiful poems; ſhe deſpiſes all churches, that of England in particular, chooſing rather to addreſs her deity in the fields, the woods, on the ſea ſhore, or in any pictureſque ſcene ſhe may chance to meet with."

"Well," cried Dalby, "that is the moſt heatheniſh thing I ever heard of; and pray my dear, do you worſhip this ſame God of Nature, that you have ſuch a very particular diſlike to going to church?"

"Mr. Dalby," cried ſhe, "you fatigue me to death; I don't know any thing about thoſe ſort of things; and, beſides, ſee how

you make Mr. and Mrs. Montague wait; I declare I'm quite aſhamed of you."

Dalby begged their pardon, again laughed at his wife, and then accompanied the party to church.

When they returned, Frederic was very much ſurpriſed at not finding George; upon enquiry, Mrs. Dalby declared that ſhe had ſeen nothing of him, and that he had diſappeared ſoon after themſelves.

"Very extraordinary!" cried Montague, I thought the young man was weary."

"Why, my dear," ſaid Dalby, "why Jenny! you hav'nt converted George to your principles? you have not been perſuading him to worſhip the God of Nature? young men are quite apt enough to worſhip him of themſelves."

"Indeed!" cried Frederic; "are young men in general ſo erroneous in their principles?"

"Why, ſir, I believe young men are apt to obey nature's dictates, and put principle in their pockets; and truly this is all I can underſtand by Mrs. ——'s adoring this ſame natural

natural God of her's; and really I ſuppoſe ſhe would make many converts to her doctrine, which at leaſt is rational."

Dalby himſelf profeſſed but little reſpect for religion; and he had now entered upon his favourite topic, that of ridiculing it, until Cecilia, exceſſively ſhocked, told him with much ſeverity, that if ſuch were his ſentiments, ſhe would adviſe him another time to be as nervous as his lady, or as weary as his ſon, ſince it was outraging common ſenſe to liſten to doctrines which he deſpiſed.

Dalby, as he was too thoughtleſs to reflect, was too eaſy to reſent—

"Well, my dear Miſs Montague," ſaid he, "that is as good a *ſet down* as ever I heard; ſo admirably comprehenſive too;—upon my word, Jenny, my dear, you had better lay aſide your nerves until we get to Brighton."

"Mr. Dalby," returned his lady, "you are always rude yourſelf, and you muſt ſuppoſe every body elſe to be ſo too; but I have too good an opinion of Miſs Cecilia's politeneſs."

"Oh dear, madam," cried Cecilia, "you do me the utmoſt honour; and you are right; I was by no means caſting any reflections upon nerves; on the contrary, I was recommending them to Mr. Dalby for imitation."

"Oh, my dear miſs," returned Mrs. Dalby, "but you don't know how ſhocking they are; I aſſure you I am quite a martyr to them."

"Oh, certainly, madam, you are much to be pitied;—Mr. George Dalby too, ſo weary!—melancholy indeed!—but upon my word I think he has hit on an excellent remedy; it might not have been amiſs if you, madam, had adopted the ſame plan."

"I cannot but ſay, Mr. Dalby," ſaid Montague, rather haughtily, "that I think this conduct of your ſon's very unaccountable."

"Oh, my dear, ſir," anſwered Dalby," all young men will do unaccountable things occaſionally; even my friend, Mr. Frederic, here, I dare ſay."

"Sometimes," cried Cecilia.

"Indeed,"

"Indeed," cried Montague, "you are better acquainted with him then than I am."

"Now, how haſtily you judge, ſir," ſaid ſhe; "have we not all done unaccountable things? has not my mother declared herſelf unable to judge whether it be decent or not to read a novel on a Sunday? has not Mr. Dalby been at church? have not you miſunderſtood? and Frederic been angry with me?—and is not all this *very* unaccountable? I declare no body has been conſiſtent except Mrs. Dalby and my aunt,—the one has been nervous, and the other to the meeting-houſe morning and afternoon."

"Cecilia, when you mention your mother and me, you will pleaſe to ſpeak with more reſpect."

"I am ſure I meant to be very reſpectful; but I generally fail,—certainly without any intention."

"Is that true, Cecilia?" ſaid Mrs. Montague.

"Come, come," ſaid Dalby, "do not be too hard upon the lady; let her be unac-

unaccountable as well as other people; it is but fair."

Tea-time arrived, and George did not appear; the whole party began to grow anxious, and Mrs. Dalby alarmed. Frederic offered to go and ſeek him; but juſt then they obſerved him ſlowly approaching: he ſoon after entered, and without noticing any one, threw himſelf into a chair, and fixed his eyes on the ground.

"Why, George, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Dalby, "where have you been?" I aſſure you I have been frightened out of my ſenſes; beſides, I am quite aſhamed to think how rude it is."

"You were weary, I thought, young man?" ſaid Dalby—"was it of us, or of praying?"

"Aye," cried Cecilia, "perhaps you have been worſhipping the God of Nature, agreeable to ſome other people's principles."

"Or you have been nervous like ſome other people's pretences."

"Or at leaſt," purſued Cecilia, "you have been unaccountable, agreeable to, and conſiſtent

conſiſtent with, the reſt of the party. Whereever you have been, I hope you have been agreeably entertained; for you have certainly entertained us by affording us a ſubject of converſation."

George looked vacantly at them, without liſtening to, or regarding what they ſaid; then turning ſuddenly to Frederic,

"Montague," ſaid he earneſtly, "will you favour me with a moment's converſation?"

"Certainly," ſaid Frederic, and aroſe.

George then, as if recollecting himſelf, apologiſed to Mr. and Mrs. Montague for the rudeneſs he had been guilty of; alledging, that he had been tempted by the fineneſs of the afternoon to take a walk, and had unconſciouſly wandered farther than he indended; he then again requeſted Frederic to accompany him, and both went out together.

"Montague," ſaid George, as ſoon as they were alone, "I have but a ſhort time had the pleaſure of being acquainted with you, yet I have two very material favours to aſk of you." "Aſk

"Aſk them confidently, then," ſaid Frederic, "and depend upon it they will not be refuſed."

"You are very good,--I am much obliged to you; and in the hope you give me, I will not heſitate to propoſe them:—you muſt, however, firſt promiſe not to wonder at their ſtrangeneſs."

"Let them be what they will," ſaid Frederic, "they cannot amaze me more than this long preparation."

"Well then, on Wedneſday next we ſhall return to town—and—"

"On Wedneſday! I thought you would ſtay a week at leaſt."

"No, I believe not; that is it will be impoſſible, as we ſhall be ſome days in town before we go to Brighton, which muſt be next week. My firſt requeſt then is, that you would accompany us. I hope you will not refuſe; to us it will give great pleaſure, to you it will at leaſt have novelty to recommend it."

"It will have every thing to recommend it," ſaid Frederic, "and nothing can give me

me greater pleaſure, if my uncle and aunt will conſent to it."

"They will not, I hope, refuſe."

"But why all this myſtery? why would you not mention this before them?"

"Becauſe—becauſe—I have another thing to aſk, which they muſt not,-that is, they need not hear."

"Indeed! and what can that be?"

"I am loath to ſay it; Montague do not aſk me to explain myſelf;—I would requeſt you——"

"What?" cried Frederic, "why do you heſitate?"

"Not to go to L—— before we go away."

"Not go to L——!" repeated Frederic, alarmed, he knew not why, "what made you ſuppoſe I ſhould? or why can you wiſh me not?"

"I entreat you, Montague, not to aſk any explanation."

"Nay, Dalby, but this is ſo *very* extraordinary; you are a perfect ſtranger to this country; before yeſterday you knew not that ſuch a place as L—— exiſted: I cannot

not but be ſurpriſed that my viſits there, ſhould be otherwiſe than indifferent to you."

"But yet do not mention this affair again, not to your couſin."

"I can have no intereſt in diſcloſing it; but you muſt allow me to think it moſt ſtrange; and as to your requeſt, it really is not exactly in my power to grant it."

"I was a fool to make it," cried George, "forget it, Montague, forget it, and endeavour not to eſteem me the leſs for mentioning it."

"You are the judge," ſaid Frederic, "whether I ought or not; at preſent I know no reaſon why you ſhould be lowered in my eſteem."

"But your couſin—will you conceal my ſtrange requeſt from her?"

"I repeat to you, that I can have no wiſh to mention it; and certainly as you requeſt it, I will not."

George thanked him, and they returned to the company.

Cecilia and Mr. Dalby, who had not obſerved the moſt Pythagorean ſilence during their

their abſence, had amuſed themſelves with curious conjectures what might be the ſubject of the conference; and as ſoon as they returned, attacked them with the moſt ſatirical enquiries concerning it.

"Why, really," ſaid George, "the requeſt I have made to my friend Montague was ſuch as I thought it would beſt to propoſe to him firſt alone, that I might learn what chance I had of ſucceeding, when I made it generally known, as it included a favour I had to entreat of Mr. and Mrs. Montague."

Montague began a ſpeech of formal politeneſs; ſaying, that he ſhould be exceedingly happy to oblige Mr. George in any thing.

"I take you at your word, ſir," interrupted George; "my favour then, is no leſs than that you would permit Frederic to accompany us to Brighton."

"Right," cried Dalby, "indeed Mr. Montague you cannot oblige all of us more; you muſt not think of refuſing."

Mon-

Montague raiſed many objections, chiefly ceremonious; but however at length yielded.

George ſuffered perſecution all the evening both from his father and Cecilia, who would not be ſatisfied with his evaſive anſwers: nor did Frederic eſcape; the anxiety which the ſtrange behaviour of George had occaſioned, was but too viſible on his countenance, and it was not believed that the real ſubject of their conference was diſcloſed. To add to this, at every interval, Mrs. Dalby took occaſion, in a gentle murmuring tone, to expoſtulate upon his odd behaviour, as ſhe termed it; the evening, of courſe, was far from agreeable either to George or Frederic; both retired as early as poſſible.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

THE agreement which had been entered into, of an early walk the next morning, was not forgotten; Cecilia, George, and Frederic aroſe at the ſame time, and proceeded together towards the field in which was Frederic's favourite ſeat.

They had already gone ſome way beyond the grounds, when ſuddenly they were met by Nancy, who, coming immediately up to them—

"Oh, Mr. Montague," ſaid ſhe, "this falls lucky, I was coming to the hall, but now this will ſave me ſome ſteps;—there is a letter, ſir."

Nancy ſuddenly bluſhed, and held down her head.

"Lauk, ſir! you ar'nt never alone; and my miſtreſs ſays, and ſo ſays Miſs—"

"Do,

"Do, for heaven's ſake, hold your tongue and leave us," ſaid Frederic.

"Dear ſir, now don't be angry; but this letter, you'll ſee, will ſurpriſe you a great deal I fancy, and tell you what you little think about, that won't pleaſe you much."

"From whom do you bring that letter, young woman?" cried George, "and for what purpoſe?"

"And pray, ſir," ſaid Frederic, "how does it intereſt you to know?"

Cecilia, who had only been prevented by her ſurpriſe from laughing at this odd dialogue, now advanced;—

"Pray, child," ſaid ſhe, where may you live, that both theſe gentlemen ſeem ſo intereſted in you?"

"Cecilia," cried Frederic, "you have long conſidered ill nature ornamental; you ſhould begin to learn that impertinent curioſity is degrading. And as to you, Nancy, I cannot thank you for thus twice expoſing me to mortification."

"You have behaved very wrong indeed, young woman," ſaid George.

"Very

"Very oddly at leaſt," ſaid Cecilia.

"Nay, indeed, Mr. Frederic," ſaid Nancy, "I am ſure I did not mean to offend you; I am ſure I thought you would be pleaſed to hear about Miſs Emma, becauſe, thought I, be ſure you loved her:—and as to you, 'Squire, I am ſure you have no buſineſs to find fault with me;—and as to you, Miſs, I—I am ſure that I never ſhould—" Nancy ſobbed, and burſt into tears.

"You have done well, Mr. Dalby—you have done well, Cecilia," cried Frederic, in a voice of ſcornful indignation; "you, ſir, in that you have choſen to diſgrace yourſelf in order to bring ridicule upon me! and you, Cecilia, who have ſacrificed honour and affection to vanity; who have expoſed me to ſtrangers—have forgotten the tie which unite us, to catch at idle admiration, which you ſuppoſed that your wit inſpired,—how ſhall I adequately thank you? But my poor Nancy, you muſt forgive me,—I have no reaſon to be angry with you; I will anſwer your letter immediately."

Nancy courteſied, thanked him, and withdrew.

"Mr.

"Mr. Montague," ſaid George, "you have been pleaſed to ſay I have diſgraced myſelf; I muſt beg the favour of you to explain yourſelf."

"That, ſir, is impoſſible; you have left me in the dark, and I only echo your own words."

"You accuſed your couſin, ſir," returned George, "of want of honour; pray to what imputation may yourſelf be liable?"

"You ſhould rather ſay," retorted Frederic, "that you have wanted diſcretion."

"It is enough, ſir," ſaid George, "it is highly improper to trouble Miſs Montague with this diſcuſſion; we ſhall adjuſt the affair another time, when we are alone."

"My dear Frederic!—Mr. Dalby!"—cried Cecilia, exceedingly alarmed, "let me intreat you not to make this trifle a ſerious affair: and you, Frederic, indeed you wrong me, I had no intention to expoſe you; I know this young woman very well, it is your foſter-ſiſter, and—"

"Why then," cried Frederic, "did you think it neceſſary to enquire where ſhe lived?"

"I

"I was merely joking," ſaid Cecilia with ſome confuſion; "but forgive me, Frederic, and let me entreat again that you and Mr. Dalby will not diſpute on this affair, which to him can be of ſo little importance."

George bit his lip;—"Montague," ſaid he, "I am indeed much to blame, you muſt forgive if you can; I have ſtrangely expoſed myſelf."

Frederic, too good natured to reſent a moment after acknowledgment had been made, was immediately reconciled to both, and they ſhortly after returned, and Frederic retired to read his letter. Upon his glancing his eye over it, he found it was from Mr. Nevil; it contained the following words:—

To Mr. Frederic Montague.

6 o'clock, Monday, Aug. 17, 7192.

SIR,

"Rather ſurpriſed I ha'n't ſeen you—ſuppoſe 'tis owing to your great company: folks begin to talk ſtrangely, and old Haywood isn't the beſt pleaſed; ſo I think, as 'tis

harveſt beginning, and I am going down into the hundreds, I may as well take ſiſter and Emmy with me, juſt for a blind; but that needn't hinder you, for you can ride you know; ſixteen miles is nothing;—a word to the wiſe;—ſo no more at preſent from

Your humble ſervant to command,

JOHN NEVIL."

Shall ſet off in an hour; the place is E.

Frederic was ſurpriſed, vexed, and diſguſted at this epiſtle, and, after regretting and bewailing the circumſtance of his Emma having ſuch a relation, ſat down and wrote the following anſwer:—

"Mr. F. O. Montague's compliments to Mr. Nevil, is extremely ſorry he is ſo ſoon going to leave the country; and ſtill more ſo, that it is conſidered neceſſary for Mrs. and Miſs Nevil to accompany him, for the reaſon which he gives. Mr. Montague will not have it in his power to accept Mr. Nevil's kind invitation, as he will ſet out for Brighton on Wedneſday.

"Compliments to Mrs. and Miſs Nevil."

When

When he had written this note, Frederic read it ſeveral times with much diſſatisfaction; it was cold, and almoſt affronting: but he was ſo diſguſted with the vulgar forwardneſs of Nevil, that he could not prevail upon himſelf to alter it: yet that Emma, or that Mrs. Nevil ſhould ſuppoſe his ſentiments altered, his affection cooled, he could not endure. After much reflection, he determined to write to Miſs Nevil, and fully explain his motives and inducements to leave the country. After conſidering a long time, ſcarcely knowing how to begin; or rather being diſſatisfied with every attempt he had made, at length he compoſed the following letter:—

"Think, my deareſt Emma, with what concern, what pain and reluctance, I have obeyed your injunction; yet would I always rigidly adhere to it; but, as in a ſhort, a very ſhort time I ſhall be many, many miles from you, I had hoped to call once more upon you, to bid you farewell—to aſk you not to forget me—to repeat how much dearer you

are to me than all the world;—but this was denied me!—I received not Mr. Nevil's letter until ſeven o'clock; and you are gone farther than, in this ſhort time, I can follow you. To oblige my friends, I muſt go to Brighton; they promiſe me pleaſure: but, ah! how can I have any pleaſure where you are not!—I ſhall return to you in October perhaps; meanwhile, if I might, I would entreat you to ſuffer me to correſpend with you; but I dare not urge it—I can only ſay it would make me happy: when I am weary of all the idle ſhew and amuſement I ſhall be engaged in, and my heart ſickens for you, how would one line cheer me! yet I am not ſo ungenerous as to wiſh you to do, for my gratification, what your better ſenſe diſapproves; and though I muſt neither ſee you nor hear from you, your lovely image will always be preſent to my thoughts, and if I may ſtill hope you love me I will be content,—content! I ſhall be happy—happier than all the world! God bleſs you, my deareſt girl!—do not, do not forget me!

and

and give my moſt affectionate regards to your mother.

I remain, with unalterable love, and trueſt eſteem, your ever affectionate

F. O. MONTAGUE.

"I muſt ſet out on Wedneſday."

Frederic directed both the note and the letter to E——; and as it was not the day in which the poſt went out from B——, he diſpatched them by his own ſervant, (who fortunately could not read) to the next poſt-town.

At breakfaſt, Dalby ſaid he had received letters which, he was ſorry to ſay, would prevent his lengthening his ſtay at B—— beyond Wedneſday.

"Letters!" exclaimed Cecilia before any one elſe could ſpeak; "why this is not poſt-day."

"No!" ſaid Dalby confuſed; "well, I received them yeſterday, but really forgot to mention them."

Every body expreſſed great concern, except Frederic, whoſe looks ſpoke much more.

"La,

"La, William!" ſaid Mrs. Dalby, "how you are always hurrying one with your letters and ſtuff!—I ſhall be fatigued to death!"

"Never mind, my dear, you may be as nervous as you pleaſe when you get to Brighton; the more the better."

"Mr. Dalby you're quite monſtrous!—George, my dear, you ſhould take my part."

"Madam," cried George, "I really did not hear what my father ſaid."

"Then you are ten times worſe than he; why he ſays the more nervous I am, the better."

"Dear Mr. Dalby," ſaid Cecilia, "I wonder you could ſay ſo, I am ſure your lady is quite nervous enough."

"O dear, aye, Miſs Cecilia," ſaid Mrs. Dalby, "I am quite killed with nervous complaints, I aſſure you; and Dr. P—ne has recommended ſea-bathing; but you ſee I can't bear the thoughts of it; don't ye think it quite terrible?"

"I really never tried it."

Mrs. Dalby wondered, and her huſband laughed, at which ſhe was again offended,

and

and again began gently murmuring complaints, until Dalby ſuddenly changed the ſubject to that of their journey, deſcribing ſeveral things to Frederic, or rather to Cecilia, as that young lady choſe to put every queſtion, and receive every anſwer to herſelf.

This day and the next paſſed much in the ſame ſtyle, Dalby and Cecilia always taking the principal part in the converſation, and becoming mutually better pleaſed with each other. Dalby ventured to hint at an invitation of her, but received ſo cold an anſwer from Mrs. Montague, who was far from happy at the idea of loſing Frederic, that he relinquiſhed the deſign.

On Tueſday evening Dr. Evans drank tea at the hall; and when the reſt of the party were all differently engaged, he requeſted a moment's converſation with Frederic, who immediately followed him into the library.

"I hope, Mr. Montague," ſaid the Doctor, "that my friendſhip for you will excuſe the liberty I take in what I am going to ſay to you."

"Oh, Dr. Evans," ſaid Frederic, "how

can you ſuppoſe an apology neceſſary for any thing you can ſay?"

"I certainly ſhould not have ſuppoſed it neceſſary in general; but as my preſent purpoſe implies ſuſpicion, it is not perhaps improper."

Frederic was ſtartled.

"You are now," purſued the Doctor, "going into the world—a ſcene wholly new to you, full of pleaſures, full of allurements, and full of dangers; more eſpecially ſo to the young and innocent: you go likewiſe without a monitor, without a protector, with a family which, I am ſorry to ſay, ſeems not to reſpect religion or morality; and with a young companion, cheerful and amiable indeed, but whoſe manners and whoſe principles have been formed in the circles of faſhionable gaiety; a circle, whoſe grand aim is to ruin principle, and ſtifle reflection:—againſt all theſe enemies you have nothing to oppoſe but your own fortitude and reaſon; the one, therefore, I would endeavour to ſtrengthen, the other to confirm."

"Oh,

"Oh, Dr. Evans," ſaid Frederic, "I wiſh I could give up this journey, the idea of it is utterly deteſtable to me; I look for nothing but vexation from it."

"Indeed!" ſaid the Doctor, "I thought it was very pleaſing to you."

"Not *now*," ſaid Frederic, and ſighed.

"It cannot however," ſaid the Doctor, now be given up, without the appearance of trifling and inconſiſtency; and one day or other you muſt be expoſed to the dangers of the world, and to defer it will be of little avail; I would therefore warn you of what is to be dreaded. The love of wine is generally the beginning of every other vice: the mind naturally ſhrinks at the idea of depravity, but a ſmall exceſs is agreed to with little reluctance; every day, that reluctance grows leſs, the exceſs is proportionably increaſed, the blood is heated, the reaſon confuſed, and the violent paſſions uncurbed, puſh on to farther and greater violation of duty: in vain does reaſon return, in vain does it bring remorſe with it; it is painful, its voice muſt again be ſilenced, and freſh guilt muſt be added, until the heart becomes

depraved and ſunk beyond the power of recal. I adviſe you then to avoid every party as much as poſſible, in which none but thoſe of your own age are included; when the ſmile of conviviality is on every face, and the heart is warmed, it is no time for reſiſtance; avoid ſuch ſituations then as much as can be; but as your time perhaps will not be wholly in your power, you cannot always chooſe; but then let no conſideration tempt you to indulge in the leaſt exceſs; having ſeveral times reſiſted, you will not be again ſolicited. One thing I would particularly caution you againſt, never *ſing* in company; you have a good voice, you underſtand muſic, it cannot but pleaſe; you will be univerſally ſought after, and all your reaſon, all your principle, will not perhaps be ſufficient to withſtand the thirſt for admiration, the gratification of vanity: this has been the ruin of many young men who otherwiſe, perhaps, would have been virtuous: your friend, Mr. George Dalby, has indeed often heard you; but as it has never been without accompaniment, you can with great propriety

priety decline on that pretence. I will ſay nothing to you of other vices, becauſe if this one is avoided, your own ſentiments, your feelings, your delicacy, will guard you againſt them. Expect, however, much perſuaſion, much ſophiſtry, much ridicule; but if you are always on your guard, your reaſon always cool, theſe will not avail; for much muſt you be debaſed indeed, more than I conceive is poſſible, if you can prefer low preſent gratification to future ſolid happineſs. Avoid implicit confidence; never truſt any one, whoſe integrity is not proved; and do not think it neceſſary to tell all your thoughts and actions, in return for an infamous detail of ſecret wickedneſs, which the perſon, who pretends to tell in confidence, wiſhes to be publiſhed to every body. Remember you are wholly in the power of him you truſt. I have but one thing more, my dear Frederic, which I would recommend to you—never be perſuaded by any arguments, let them be ever ſo ſpecious, to do any thing which the firſt impulſe of your heart led you to avoid; as an excellent author obſerves,

whatever admits of a doubt as to its propriety, is certainly wrong; for the path of rectitude always preſents itſelf clear and open to the ſight; therefore be certain, that whatever requires defending, muſt have in itſelf ſomething criminal, as virtue needs not poliſhing, to ſhew its lovelineſs, though vice may often receive it, to hide its deformity."

Frederic liſtened attentively, and remained ſome time ſilently reflecting; the laſt injunction he had already tranſgreſſed; he had already done what the firſt impulſe had inclined him to avoid,—what had required defending, and ſtill worſe, concealment; he had likewiſe implicated her whom he loved in his fault. Frederic ſighed at the reflection; then, recollecting himſelf, he thanked Dr. Evans with real gratitude, and promiſed to follow implicitly what he recommended.

As they were returning to the company, they were met by Cecilia—

"Oh, Frederic," cried ſhe, "you are the moſt tireſome creature in the world; I have been

been waiting you to ſing the ſecond part to a duet."

"I cannot ſing," ſaid Frederic.

"Ridiculous! it is the eaſieſt thing in the world. I have been ſinging fine things, and putting Mrs. Dalby into *quiet extacies* till I am tired; and now I am going to ſing a thing to pleaſe her huſband."

They now returned to the room; Cecilia ſat down to her harp, and began a lively air in the Haunted Tower.

"Come," ſaid ſhe, "you muſt be Edward, and I, Adela;" and then began.

Frederic immediately complied. Mrs. Dalby, although ſhe beat time with her fan, talked inceſſantly to Mrs. Montague during the ſong, notwithſtanding the many attempts her huſband made to ſilence her: on ſuch occaſions, ſhe ſtopped a moment, and exclaimed—"Ch—arming! delightful!" and then continued her diſcourſe.

George liſtened in ſilent delight, but ſighed deeply when the air was concluded, and laid his hand over his eyes.

"Aye, aye," cried Dalby, "that is ſomething

thing like, Miſs Montague; upon my word you improve with your couſin's aſſiſtance."

"Oh, I aſſure you, ſir," ſaid Cecilia, Frederic is very capital when he pleaſes; but I don't know how it is, men make nothing of it with accompaniment, unleſs they ſing in a *made* voice, which is horrid; but if you could prevail upon my couſin to ſing by himſelf, I aſſure you it would not be ſo much amiſs."

"No, really," ſaid Frederic, "I cannot."

"Yes, yes," returned ſhe," come, come, the 'Turban'd Turk,' I have often heard you," and ſhe haſtily ran over ſeveral bars of it.

"Upon my word," ſaid Dr. Evans, "I think it would be very ſtrange, when we can have the advantage of a lady's voice, to wiſh a man's to ſuperſede it."

"And for that reaſon," ſaid Dalby, "you would fatigue the lady to death."

"Very true," ſaid Cecilia, "I muſt be relieved, the *figuranti* always relieve the principal dancers."

"And pray may I aſk," cried Dalby, "(I under-

underſtood you had never been in town) how came you by this piece of knowledge?"

"Why is there not a circulating library at C——? do we not ſubſcribe to it? and of courſe, we learn every thing; but this is nothing to the purpoſe: Frederic, I muſt inſiſt upon your ſinging the Turban'd Turk."

"If you will accompany me," ſaid Frederic.

This produced a long conteſt, in which however, Cecilia at length yielded, although very diſcontentedly.

Eleven o'clock the next day, was the time fixed upon for their ſetting out.

"Well!" cried Cecilia, as they were ſeated at breakfaſt, "and now you are all going, how wretchedly dull we ſhall be?"

"You have little reaſon to thank us indeed," ſaid Dalby, "ſince we rob you of your couſin."

"Why, certainly," returned ſhe, "Frederic uſed always to enliven us very much, and we muſt of courſe miſs him exceedingly. Well, don't be angry, for really and truly Frederic, for all what I ſay, I am very ſorry to

to part with you.—Oh dear, dear, it will be I don't know how long before we have a diſpute again! but you will write to me often, very often, won't you?"

"To be ſure I will, my dear Cecilia."

"Aye, pray now, when you are all happy and merry and comfortable, and in the midſt of amuſement and pleaſure, do not forget the poor ſolitary *Quartette* you leave behind;—upon my word we ſhall be much to be pitied."

In a ſhort time afterwards the carriages were at the door; Mr. and Mrs. Dalby, it was agreed, ſhould travel by themſelves in the coach, and George and Frederic ſhould follow in a chaiſe. Juſt as they were ſetting out, Mrs. Montague called Frederic aſide—

"My dear Frederic," ſaid ſhe, "wherever you go, whatever ſociety you enter into, do not forget religion; and, oh! my dear child preſerve your innocence: bring back a heart and perſon as untainted as it is at preſent;—I do not doubt you, yet I tremble for you, when I think to what you will be expoſed; but

but never, when temptation aſſails you, think it in vain to call upon the great God of Heaven for aſſiſtance; doubt not but it will always avail you, when perhaps your own ſtrength may fail: I know I need ſay little to you on this ſubject, your own principles are fixed, your reſolution is ſteady, and I never can doubt or ſuſpect you, for you have never deceived me."

"Madam, my dear mother, do not, do not talk ſo—ſo kindly to me,—indeed I do not deſerve it."

"Not deſerve it!—you have always deſerved my beſt opinion, my trueſt eſteem; do but continue as true. as open, as innocent, as ingenuous, in ſhort every thing which you are now, and I ſhall be happy indeed."

Frederic ſighed heavily; this was more bitter than the ſevereſt ſpeech of Cecilia.

"Indeed, indeed," ſaid he, "I do not deſerve your eſteem! I am unworthy!"

"My dear Frederic do not talk ſo; in my opinion you deſerve every thing; be certain then of poſſeſſing my higheſt eſteem; nor

nor does your modeſty occaſion its decreaſe: but I muſt quit the ſubject; the chaiſe is waiting, and I have ſeveral things to ſay to you: you muſt appear as a gentleman, as the ſon of Mr. Montague, eſpecially as he chooſes you to bear his name; you will therefore have need of ſomething more than your uſual allowance: this I believe will be ſuffiient," continued Mrs. Montague, taking out a pocket-book, and giving it to Frederic, "I know you will uſe it properly; there are notes to the amount of fifty pounds: if you ſhould have occaſion for more, write to me, and I ſhall always be glad to ſend it you. Inſtead of your own man, who we think is too aukward; Daniel, who is younger, more genteel, and likely to do you credit, will go with you. Well, my dear Frederic, God bleſs you; remember what I have ſaid to you, and write to us often."

Frederic preſſed the hand ſhe held out to his lips; thanked her earneſtly for her kindneſs, promiſed to obſerve every injunction, and in future to endeavour to deſerve her good opinion. Mrs. Montague then kiſſed

him

him affectionately, and they returned to the hall, where the reſt of the party were waiting.

" God bleſs you my dear Frederic," ſaid Cecilia.

" God bleſs you, my Cecilia!"—a tear in ſpite of her efforts ſtood in her eye, which ſhe endeavoured, by a cheerful ſpeech, to conceal and to check; the party then ſet out.

CHAP. XVII.

As they paſſed along in the chaiſe, Frederic looked out of the window, and in his mind, bade adieu to every tree and ſhrub by the road, poſſeſſed with a melancholy idea that he ſhould never ſee them again. From them his thoughts turned to Emma—many miles from him! gone before he could take leave of her!—gone where, perhaps, ſhe might forget him! then he revolved in his mind

mind their late converſation; the tender, the half-reluctant manner in which ſhe had deſired him not to viſit her; the ſweet look ſhe had given him, when they met in the chapel at L——: then he repreſented in his imagination, her lovely face, the ſoft expreſſion of her dark blue eyes, heightened in beauty by the long black laſhes which overſhadowed them,—the high-arched brow contraſting with the exquiſitely tranſparent ſkin on which it grew,—the ſweetly turned lip, the mouth where good humour always dwelt,—the countenance which had fondly looked on him, and had confirmed what that tongue, which could not deceive, had confeſſed;—Frederic fondly dwelt on the image; the ſoft preſſure of her hand ſtill vibrated to his heart,—he almoſt imagined he yet felt it.

"Ah!" thought he, "what is ſhe now doing? is ſhe thinking of me, as I am of her?—perhaps—" Frederic ſighed.

The two young men had a long while, by mutual conſent, been ſilent; for George, no leſs abſtracted, although engaged in far leſs pleaſant

pleaſant thoughts, attempted not to converſe; but when Frederic ſighed, unconſciouſly he re-echoed it, and each looked at the other.

"Montague," ſaid George, "I perceive we have both the ſame cauſe of regret; you repent of having accepted our invitation—you regret leaving B——."

"No," ſaid Frederic faintly, "but I am ſorry you hurried your departure."

"So am I."

"You! I thought it was your propoſal; your father certainly intended ſtaying longer,"

"He did ſo."

"Why then did you prevent him?"

"Montague, do not aſk me."

"Certainly not, if you wiſh me to deſiſt; but it is ſurely very extraordinary."

"I cannot bear you to ſuſpect me, yet I muſt not remove your doubts; they will be removed ſoon enough; but while we are together, I cannot endure that you ſhould think meanly of me. I am not naturally bad; I always wiſh to do right; but you who

who have been ſo happy as to be educated at home, have no idea of the dangers to which a young man's principles are expoſed in the ſociety of the world. As ſoon as I was entered at Cambridge, every one in the college was eager to enquire into the circumſtances, the rank in life, of the *freſh-man*; it was ſoon found out that I was the ſon of a man of fortune, and I had the abſurd vanity to boaſt of the large the very extravagant allowance which my father made me; I was attacked, courted on all ſides. Naturally fond of ſociety, young and thoughtleſs,—proud too of the diſtinction paid me on account of my being a fellow-commoner, I gave myſelf wholly up to diſſipation and folly; yet in the midſt of this, I was not happy; I could not but deſpiſe myſelf; and as I had yet too much courage left to endeavour to drown reflection, I ſuffered much more than I enjoyed. This at length made me weary of the courſe I had purſued; but I had no alternative; I was not of a temper to apply to ſtudy or reliſh ſolitude, and I had none to ſecond my good reſolution; my

dulneſs was ridiculed, and if I dared mention a change of conduct, I was ſcouted: to eſcape perſecution was impoſſible; if I ſhut myſelf up, I was diſturbed; if I declared myſelf ill, I had to encounter the moſt infamous ſurmiſes: in ſhort, before I had reſided two terms, I heartily wiſhed to leave the univerſity; to this, however, my father objected; he did not wiſh me to take a degree, but he deſired me to reſide for a year or two, in order, (as he ſaid) to make connections; I would not diſoblige him, and of courſe ſubmitted. The college at which I was entered was not large, and of courſe I was upon terms of intimacy with the greater part of it; a few, however, were excepted; theſe were denominated by my aſſociates, "confounded *quizzes*;" and I, underſtanding this as a term of reproach, had avoided them, as much they ſeemed to avoid us; but, whenever I had made an attempt to recover my own eſteem, having received the ſame appellation, I began to entertain a more favourable opinion of it. Among theſe excepted perſons was the brother of a noble-

man,

man, a young man of an amiable aſpect, who had always treated me with great civility, and had ſometimes joined in my parties, but never in my exceſſes. To this young man, when I had received my father's letter, I determined to go; I told him I was weary of my preſent life, that I was determined to *cut* my party, and if his ſociety would admit me I ſhould be extremely happy to join them. Delaval (that was his name) ſmiled at my reſolution; he aſſured me, however, he ſhould always receive me with pleaſure, and from that time treated me with the greateſt friendſhip; encouraged by his example, I changed my mode of life, and I became happy. I am ſtill acquainted with the young man, he is at Brighton, and if you pleaſe, I will introduce you to him; but he is much altered, he was then cheerful in manners, though ſtrict in morals; always even, always in temper, his ſpirits were never violent, and never depreſſed; he had nothing to dread, nothing to repent of: he left the univerſity before me, and when I met him again, ſo much was he changed, I ſcarce knew

knew him; he was pale as death; deſpair ſeemed fixed on his brow, and he trembled as he ſhook my hand. I enquired with great concern into the cauſe of his diſorder; he ſhook his head and entreated me to ſpare him. Poor Delaval! he no doubt has done ſomething which he thinks upon with ſhame and remorſe. But what yet more ſurpriſed me, he deſired my company to dine with him at a tavern, where he was to meet a party in which were included his brother the Earl of E——, and ſeveral young men of faſhion: I went, and how was I amazed after dinner, when I obſerved my poor friend fill a bumper to every toaſt, and anxiouſly look for the return of the bottle: he grew intoxicated even to madneſs:—Montague, I yet remember with extreme pain the concern I then felt. I called on him the next morning;—"Dalby," ſaid he, "do not come to me any more; you have ſeen me in happier, better days! you ſhould not ſee me now;" and he ſhrunk from me. How was I grieved! he that was once my monitor, my example, to be ſo fallen! but I ſaw too juſt grounds for

pity to blame him. I urged, I entreated him to tell me the cauſe of his preſent unhappineſs; but in vain; he only beſought me to leave him, never to ſee him again;—I withdrew. Unhappy Delaval! you muſt have ſuffered dreadfully to be ſo changed."

"And can you not all gueſs," ſaid Frederic, "at the cauſe of his unhappineſs? for it is evidently to avoid reflection that he indulges in intoxication."

"That is certainly the caſe, but I cannot form the leaſt idea of the cauſe, unleſs I may ſuppoſe that his peace of mind has fallen a ſacrifice to the enticements of vice; yet that ſeems almoſt impoſſible; his were the ſtrongeſt principles of religion, and his ſtrict adherence to virtue had always rendered him the object of private eſteem and public ridicule: but his brother, the Earl of E——, is ſaid to be very diſſolute; the Counteſs, his mother, a mere woman of faſhion, and his ſiſter, Lady Anne, a complete highflyer;—but Delaval *is* not, or *was* not a man to be influenced by example: he was educated by his father, a man of the firſt character, who has

has not very long been dead: the eldeſt ſon was always the mother's favourite, and the daughter has been all her life at the *firſt* ſchools, where ſhe has learned the *firſt* airs. You will ſee them at Brighton, with their aunt Lady Sarah, a complete curioſity, a wit, a ſcholar, a critic, and an author; whoſe volubility and wonderful memory will amaze and fatigue you; her diſcourſe is a perfect Heliconian ſtream; ſhe will repeat volumes of her own, and the compoſition of others, all of them never yet publiſhed; but the misfortune is, ſhe conceives originality, as ſhe terms it, a ſufficient recommendation."

"I'm afraid then," ſaid Frederic, "ſhe fails of exciting the admiration ſhe expects."

"Generally perhaps; but ſhe is very good-natured, and does not reſent a little laughter now and then, provided you can perſuade her it is *with* her, not *at* her."

"But that muſt require great ſkill I ſhould ſuppoſe ſometimes."

"Oh, no, ſhe is very eaſily managed, and her favour is attained without much difficulty; only ſcratch down a few lines from

an old magazine; ſwear they are your own; give them to her, and ſhe will worſhip you; and, what is more, ſhew you her whole collection."

"Yes, but not inſiſt upon my reading it, I hope."

"To be ſure, and commenting upon every piece one by one."

"Oh, that would be too inſupportable! —well, I do not think I ſhall be very anxious to cultivate her ladyſhip's acquaintance; but for Mr. Delaval I really feel intereſted."

"You will be more ſo when you know him; he has a noble generous heart; and no one can be acquainted without eſteeming him. His fortune at preſent is large and independent, his father leaving him much more than is uſual with younger brothers; but he has not, as I have heard, yet thought of marriage. I once had an idea that diſappointment in love was the cauſe of his unhappineſs; but his fortune, his rank, his character, perſon, and manners conſidered, no woman, I think, would refuſe him."

"Perhaps," ſaid Frederic, and the colour glowed

glowed in his cheeks, "he has attached himſelf to an inferior object, and his own pride and that of his family, prevent his indulging his inclination."

"That cannot be," ſaid George, "ſince I know no ſuch reaſon would have any weight with him: indeed I have often heard him declare, if he could meet with an amiable woman who could love him, he ſhould not regard either her fortune or her rank."

"And there I perfectly agree with him: what are the idle diſtinctions of rank? of what conſequence are they?"

"Why, Montague, I'm afraid you are a downright *democrat*."

"I certainly am no reſpecter of birth; yet do not ſuppoſe me a leveller—far from it: I do not condemn the diſtinctions of rank, only as they interfere with the ſolid comforts of life, and when real happineſs is ſacrificed to their empty ſound."

This ſubject engaged them in converſation until the end of the ſtage. Mr. and Mrs. Dalby, who travelled with four horſes, arrived at the ſame time. Mrs. Dalby was

extremely nervous, and her huſband, who had been tormenting her all the way, to conſole himſelf, was quite fatigued. As ſoon as they were alighted, Mrs. Dalby called to her ſon to take her part, for that "William had uſed her ſhamefully." Frederic therefore left them.

As he was walking along the yard, he obſerved an elderly man talking to his ſervant, who, upon obſerving him, came up to him; and, after apologizing for the liberty he was taking, enquired if his name was Oſmond.

"Oſmond!" replied Frederic ſurpriſed.

"I beg your pardon, ſir, but that was your father's name."

"It was," ſaid Frederic with a ſigh; "but how did you know him?"

"Why, ſir, I was the lad who drove your father and Miſs Emmy many years ago when they returned from London."

Frederic had heard his unhappy mother's ſtory from his uncle; but as Montague had always mentioned it very ſlightly, but few of the circumſtances had come to his knowledge; and now a melancholy curioſity, promped

prompted him to enquire more minutely; he deſired the man to follow him into a room, and at his requeſt, he related the whole affair.

Though he liſtened eagerly, yet Frederic felt a ſenſation of pain which made him long deeply for the concluſion of the tale: he ſighed when he heard the laſt ſad circumſtances.

"Your ſiſter-in-law," ſaid he, "was very kind to my poor mother: where is ſhe now? my uncle ſaid ſhe was married, and very happily ſituated."

"Oh, no, ſir; poor Sally never did a more fooliſh thing in her life than marrying again. The 'Squire, to be ſure, was very good to her, as ſhe told me, and gave her a great deal of money; but Williams was a ſad drunken fellow, and ſpent it all; and when he died, poor Sally muſt have gone to the workhouſe, if it had not been for the ſon of my brother; he has hurt himſelf to keep her, and to help her other children: and you muſt think, ſir, it is a hard thing, for a young man of one-and-twenty to keep a ſick mother upon what he can earn."

"And what can he earn?" cried Frederic.

"Why wages are high where he lives,—perhaps he may have twelve guineas a year."

"High! do you call that high?" ſaid Frederic ſmiling: "well," continued he, after thinking for a few minutes; "leave me awhile, my friend, I will ſee you again in a few moments."

The man did as he deſired. Frederic took out the pocket-book which was given him by Mrs. Montague: the very kind behaviour of Sally to the mother he had never ſeen and to himſelf, when he had no other friend, ſtruck forcibly upon his feelings. The kind diſintereſted heart which had felt for *her* ſorrows who had given him being, and who was gone for ever, felt for them when ſhe was diſowned, neglected, loſt, deſpiſed;—had relieved, comforted, befriended her when forſaken by all the world;—that heart was ſickening in miſery and diſtreſs!—that ſupporting hand was feeble with want and infirmity! Emmeline, in her grave, could not be grateful; but himſelf, her repreſeta-

tive,

tive, inherited her obligations, though not her misfortunes, and it was now the time to repay them. But might he diſpoſe of the bounty of Mrs. Montague otherwiſe than as herſelf had directed? would ſhe be pleaſed with ſuch a diſpoſal? Frederic accuſed himſelf for injuring her ſo much for a moment as to doubt, not merely of her acquieſcence, but her higheſt approbation. Frederic heſitated no longer; but, incloſing the bills, and recalling the man, he directed him to ſend them immediately to his ſiſter at Eaſt Tilbury; and, without giving the man time to enquire into the nature of the contents, left him and joined Mr. and Mrs. Dalby.

"Really Mr. Montague," ſaid that gentleman as ſoon as he ſaw him, "I was afraid you was weary of us already, and had ſet off on your return to B——."

"Well, William, I ſhould not at all wonder," ſaid Mrs. Dalby laughingly, "only think how tireſome you are."

"Nay, my dear Jenny, if that is the caſe, what did you marry me for? you had better by half have kept ſingle, and then your nerves

and your languor, and your thouſand little *etceteras*, would have fatigued nobody but yourſelf."

"What, and you'd have had me been a naſty odious old maid."

"Well, come, you are right enough there; I deteſt an old maid myſelf, eſpecially," continued he, looking at Frederic, "if ſhe happens to be a Preſbyterian."

"And why, ſir," ſaid Frederic, "ſhould that increaſe your diſlike?"

"Becauſe I deteſt that hypocritical ſet; I wonder our government tolerates them; they will be encouraged till they undermine us all."

"I am ſorry, ſir," to hear you ſpeak ſo diſreſpectfully of a religion which has been ornamented by ſo many learned and pious men, and which differ ſo little, and in points ſo immaterial from our own."

"Why, young man, ſure your aunt has not converted you? you are a Preſbyterian, I believe, yourſelf."

"No, ſir; I have been educated in the church; I admire its principles, its tenets, but above all, its moderation; I ſee no rea-

ſon

ſon to deſert it: yet I reſpect the ſectaries, eſpecially the Preſbyterians; and I wiſh the members of our church would emulate the fervour and decency of their devotion."

"Well, Mr. Montague, if you are not one of them, you talk very much like them."

"What an argument are you bringing in their favour! becauſe I ſpeak warmly in the cauſe of religion, I reſemble a Preſbyterian! this is however juſt,—in that cauſe, to their honour be it ſpoken, they are always warm: if they are ſometimes too much ſo, it is an error of the head, not of the heart; it is one of thoſe faults which is the exceſs of a virtue; and I exult in them as brother-chriſtians and brother-proteſtants, and taken collectively, as a people who do honour to our holy religion."

"Ha, ha, ha!—well, Mr. Montague, I ſee we muſt give you a little poliſh; you will not give us ſuch a lecture two months hence:—he'll get rid of a few of theſe queer notions in the world, won't he George?"

"I hope not, ſir," ſaid George very gravely.

"You hope not, ſir!—with that queer, long, puritanical face!—why I hope you

have not turned round-head, jacobine, preſbyterian too!—I hope you are not going to preach and to pray!"

George was ſilent.

"Mr. Montague," ſaid Mrs. Dalby, you'll excuſe William's rudeneſs; but indeed you can't think how odd it will look if you talk ſo in company: people of faſhion never talk of ſuch things."

"I am ſorry for it madam," ſaid Frederic; "I am afraid they do not think of them then."

This was merely anſwered by a ſmile of contemptuous pity, and the converſation dropped. This converſation did not raiſe his new acquaintance in the eſteem of Frederic; again and more earneſtly did he wiſh he had not left his ſolitude at B——, and the company of his lovely Emma. George ſeemed little diſpoſed to interrupt his reflections during the reſt of the journey, and no more converſation paſſed until they arrived in London.

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END OF VOL. I.